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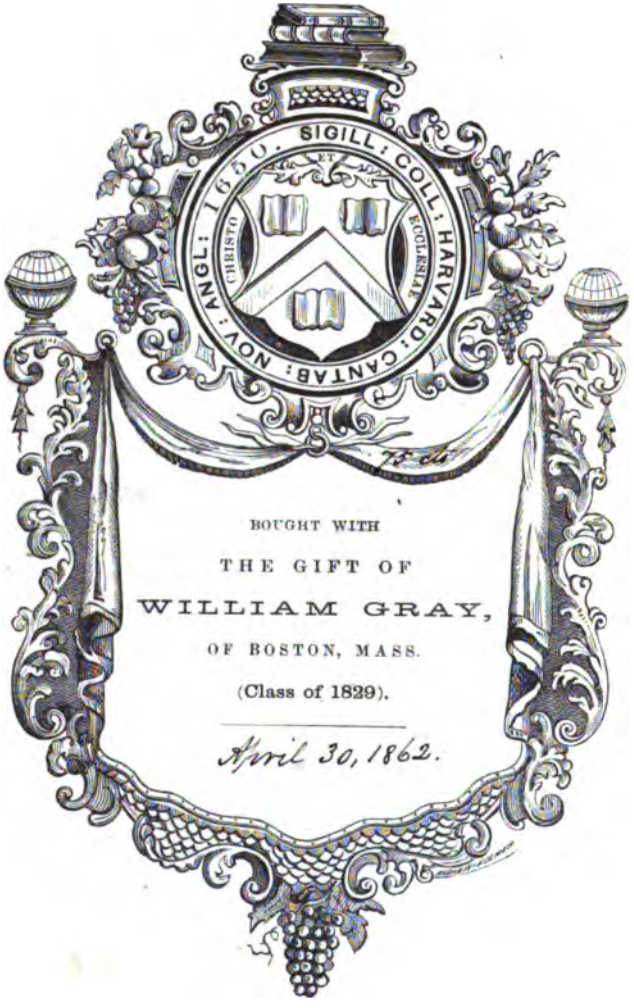

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EX-PRESIDENT OF MEXICO.

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TRAVELS

OVER

THE TABLE LANDS AND CORDILLERAS

OF

MEXICO.

DURING THE YEARS 1843 AND 44;

INCLUDING

A DESCRIPTION OF CALIFORNIA, THE PRINCIPAL CITIES AND MINING DISTRICTS OF THAT REPUBLIC,

AND THE

BIOGRAPHIES OF ITURBIDE AND SANTA ANNA.

BY ALBERT M. GILLIAM,

LATE U. S. CONSUL TO CALIFORNIA.

WITH MAPS AND PLATES.

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in the Clerk's Office of the District Court, of the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

DEDICATION.

To General WADDY THOMPSON, *Late Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary from the government of the United States, to the Republic of Mexico.*

ESTEEMED SIR,—

In publishing the Journal of my Travels in Mexico, I have been unable to think of any other than yourself, to whom I would inscribe this volume.

I have done so, not for the reason of your well known fame at home and abroad, but from a desire to offer some memorial of the polite attention and official aid you rendered me while in Mexico.

In thus dedicating my book, I wish to do honour to myself, by connecting my labour to a name, honoured for its learning, talent, steadiness and patriotism, rather than to attempt to commemorate your good qualities; and however unworthy it may be deemed by those who peruse it, the work is to depend upon its own merits, and not upon the writer.

It is a delicate, and no grateful task to write upon the manners and customs of a nation so dissimilar to our own; and to delineate character impartially, and describe whatever was to be seen, ignorant of the language and customs of the people among whom we have so recently sojourned, demanding my most assiduous attention and observation, requiring often my distrust, and judgment deferred, until confirmed by investigation and the opinions of intelligent persons, long resident in the country.

Mexico has for the last twenty-five years given to the world, names conspicuous for deeds of chivalry; and amid the disadvantages of repeated revolutions, the individual would be wilfully blind, who is not struck, when beholding those ill-fated people, with the fire of their genius, the rapidity of their conceptions, and their love of liberty and independence—worthy of a better fate, but ever destined to be smothered in their embers, by the benighting hand of superstition, and the ambition of demagogues. May God speed their delivery from these forebodings.

Whatever Mexico has gained since our residence in that country, from the change of power in the deposing of her former dictator, time must develope the results to its people,—and in conclusion, esteemed sir, permit me to say, in thus dedicating to you my book, that I am,

Sir,

With great respect,

Your obedient servant,

ALBERT M. GILLIAM.

PREFACE.

In compliance with the general custom of writing a preface, it is my desire to say, that I should not publish my Travels in Mexico, but for the flattering solicitations of some friends.

My journey in that interesting country, was of long continuance. Individuals in Mexico informed me that it was unknown, that persons in a private capacity had ever accomplished so great a distance of internal travel at any one period; and not unfrequently it happened, that in parting with acquaintances, many apprehensions and doubts would be expressed of the success of my enterprise.

Although much has been written upon detached portions of Mexico, as seen by other travellers, yet I have written with a hope, that a journey of about four thousand miles, in a country that has for nearly four hundred years engaged the attention of the world, will not be read without exciting some interest.

The ignorance of the geography of Mexico, has resulted from the fact, that no scientific individual has ever traversed its extended territories, which would enable him to locate rivers and cities, or to describe mountains, valleys and lakes,—it is from the want of this knowledge that a map has never been taken of Mexico; and the only one bearing the name that can be relied on is that of Baron Humboldt, which was in the main sketched from the imagination. I have taken care to draw as accurate a map of my travels, as my time and observation permitted.

It is to be regretted, that whilst other countries have industriously had their geographical, geological and mineralogical surveys, Mexico has remained inert, and satisfied with the gloom and ignorance in which the first revolution found her—the philosophic stores of her dominions are locked up from the world, and only probed here and there by foreign research.

Since my return to the United States, my time has been so much occupied that I have not been enabled to devote due attention and study to the composition and arrangement of my manuscript, but since it has gone forth, I can only regret, that haste has compelled me to publish its imperfections with whatever good qualities it may possess. I fear that my knowledge of the Spanish will be sentenced by the clas-

sic eye—yet in apology, I hope I may be excused; and permit me to say, that I have given it in the most grammatical manner that my limited opportunity of learning it would allow.

My feelings of gratitude will not permit me to conclude without expressing my thanks to my friends of Virginia. Their generosity I have often had reason to acknowledge. The few to whom I was introduced, distinguished in a nation's confidence and patronage, I shall always cherish.

I am happy in congratulating my fellow citizens on their prosperity; on their possession of a land unequalled in its resources; and above all, as they are the only people truly enjoying constitutional liberty and freedom of conscience, where the laurels of victory unrestrained by power, and uncorrupted by gold, deck the brow of the triumphant in the great contention of the field of principle.

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TRAVELS IN MEXICO.

CHAPTER I.

My Journal. The plain and unsophisticated narration of facts is of interest to the reader. Incidents as happening the more beautifully and naturally are illustrative of cause and effect. Commission by President Tyler, as Consul of the Port of San Francisco, Upper California, in the Republic of Mexico. Embarked Oct. 15, 1843. Three casualties in three months. First day's travel in the Natural Bridge Stage. Arrived, the 18th instant, at Guyandotte, on the Ohio. Voyage down the river, having a view of several States of the Union. Arrived at Cincinnati, on the 23d inst. Yellow Fever in New Orleans. Determined to spend one week in Cincinnati. Entertained by hearing the Rev. Nicholas Cobbs, D. D., preach. On the 29th inst. frost at New Orleans. My departure from Cincinnati. Steamer James Madison. On the 1st November, beheld the magnificent meeting of the Ohio and Mississippi rivers. On the night of the 7th inst. arrived in sight of New Orleans. Splendid view of the city.

Having, with care, kept my Journal, from the day of my departure from home, I shall, therefore, give it to the world in the style of the original manuscript.

The plain, unsophisticated narration of facts, as at the moment noticed by the traveller, I have presumed to be not only the more intelligible to all, but of greater interest to the general reader.

The studied system that some have aimed at, by an over-cultivation of elegancy of diction and "far-fetched" classical illustrations, have often failed to entertain more than the concise, connected history of incidents, which always the more beautifully and naturally illustrate "cause and effct," and thus, by intuition, guide "the mind's eye" of the peruser to see as the tourist beheld.

With such views I shall endeavour to avoid isolation, not with the hope of pleasing the imagination, and affording a banquet to the mind—but of offering that solid fund of in-

formation and improvement to the examiner, by a detail of facts that he had most fondly hoped for.

Having been commissioned by his Excellency President Tyler, Consul of the Port of San Francisco, Upper California, in the Republic of Mexico, and having been presented with the accustomed documents and despatches to the resident Minister of the American Legation at the city of Mexico, I, without delay, bade adieu, on the 15th of October, 1843, to many friends, and the place of my nativity, Lynchburg, Va., for New Orleans, the distant port of my embarkation.

Being by nature of a domestic predominancy of habit, I ever had an aversion to long journeys, the more especially by stage coaches; for it almost invariably happened that, whenever I attempted that mode of travel, some misfortune would of consequence befall, for the occurrences of horses by fright running down hills and precipitous mountains, and in some instances upsetting in terrific ways; from which, although my life has been spared, yet often left me with bruised and mangled limbs. Indeed, the several casualties of three overturnings in stage coaches, the running off of the cars from a railroad track, and a storm at sea, in a steamboat, off the coast of Cape Hatteras, and that too all in the short space of three months, had almost impressed my mind with presentiments of dangers to be encountered by travelling.

However, my first day's travel on my way to the West, was a very pleasant one, in the Natural Bridge stage: it thus continued until the evening of the 18th inst., when I arrived at the town of Guyandotte, on the Ohio river; and, as I followed my baggage on board of a steamboat that was in waiting for passengers, and ascended its upper deck to take a last look at the distant mountains of my native State, over which I had so recently passed, and which were then, amidst volumes of smoke, and the harsh sonorousness of escaping steam, fast receding from view, my bosom was

enlivened with feelings which were never before felt, and my mind could not but be filled with admiration and many reflections, as I voyaged down the beautiful river for the first time, beholding upon both sides different States of the Union.

Upon my arrival at Cincinnati, on the 22d inst., I was informed by passengers who had just arrived at that place from New Orleans, that the yellow fever, notwithstanding the lateness of the season, was yet raging in that city, insomuch that it would be considered very hazardous for one from so far north as I was, to venture, where disease and death were devastating the place. I therefore determined to spend one week in the pleasant city of Cincinnati, the famed "Queen of the West."

Whilst at Cincinnati, my time was engaged with much interest during my stay; and I may also add that a portion of it was profitably as well as agreeably entertained, by hearing the Rev. Nicholas Cobbs, D. D., of the English Episcopal denomination, preach at his church of Saint Paul's. Dr. Cobbs is a native of Bedford county, Virginia, and during his residence there I had often heard his impressive eloquence. But the reverend clergyman having been called to minister in holy things in the city of Cincinnati, without my knowledge, I cannot express my felicitous enjoyment, upon the eve of my embarking to a strange land, seated as I then was, under the voice of one whose piety I so much respected, inviting me in sweet tones, and in manner and language the most persuasive, to the realms of bliss.

On the morning of the 29th instant, news having reached Cincinnati that welcome Jack Frost had visited the city of New Orleans, I found hundreds who like myself had but impatiently awaited tidings of that hoary benefactor of the human species, previous to embarking for that port—for with him for our pioneer, we could with bold hearts penetrate the lower country, as pestilence and death always fled

from his cold and purifying touch. I therefore, without delay, hastened on board the James Madison, a boat of the first class, Captain J. Fulton, master, bound for New Orleans, which, by the early hour of 10 o'clock, A. M., had all of its state rooms taken; and, when night came, there was scarcely room upon the cabin floor for weary passengers to repose their bodies.

My journey again commenced upon the deep, expansive, and lengthened Ohio. It was with feelings of much gratification that, upon the 1st day of November, at Cairo, I for the first time beheld one of the sublimest scenes to be witnessed in America—the majestic meeting of the great Ohio and the Mississippi rivers; and, as I looked upon the union of the waters of the West, which were in one common angry and turbulent element beneath me, rushing on with maddening fury to a vast and common home in the mighty deep, my mind could but be, in the spectacle, taught a lesson of the onward tendency of all things; for man, with accumulated years, and with many tributary cares, is too rapidly, with an irresistible career, floating downwards to the vast ocean of eternity.

On the night of the 7th inst., the James Madison arrived in sight of the city of New Orleans, a distance of about two thousand miles from the port of Guyandotte, Va. I could but consider my arrival at that city, at that late hour, fortunate, as New Orleans cannot be seen under a more favourable aspect, than by approaching it under the cover of darkness. I beheld, as the boat rapidly advanced, an extended quarter of a circle, of about two miles in length, thickly lined with the floating palaces of the West, and then with the shipping from all parts of the world. The steamboats a blaze of light from stem to stern—some letting off their steam with deafening noise, whilst some were extinguishing their fires with hissing sounds, as the water was thrown upon the red hot brands under the boilers; whilst, at the same time, lights from the decks and the cabin windows of the

shipping, extended an illumination, until it was lost in distant littleness; from which lurid glare Jack tar, with merry laugh and song, could be seen and heard furling his sail and tackle, above the shouts of porters, and the rattling of drays and hacks; when far above the levee, the innumerable lights of the tall houses of the city, shed a halo of brilliancy over a scene the equal of which I had never before beheld, and which, when taken altogether, really presented to the eye a magnificent crescent, adorned with sparkling scintillating gems. And thus, most apropos, has the city of New Orleans been denominated the "Crescent City."

CHAPTER II.

Visited Collector of the Port. His kind attention. Engaged passage on the schooner Amazon for Vera Cruz. Reception by the Mate. Destined to lodge in the Ladies' Cabin. Confusion of the Mate by the Captain's arrival. His hospitality. Towed by the Arkansas. Detained by a fog. The tow drifted. The Steamer by a backward revolution came stern upon the broadside of the Amazon. Much damage sustained. Capt. Harding in a passion. We sail for Balize. The Captain leaves the Amazon and returns with a Pilot. We again set sail. Meeting of the Mississippi and the Gulf of Mexico. Cast anchor at the mouth of the Pass. Departure of the Pilot, and his rescue from drowning. Out of sight of land. The Captain's indisposition. A storm at sea. A man lost. View of the Perote mountains. A calm. Catching Fish. The Orizava. By telescope viewed the port of Vera Cruz. Boarded by a Pilot. Anchored under the walls of San Juan de Ulloa. Disembarked from the Amazon for the Mole. Novel sights. First night in Vera Cruz. Description of Vera Cruz. Health of Vera Cruz. Northers.

On the morning of the 8th of November, I, without delay, visited Mr. Dorsey, the Collector of the Customs at the Port of New Orleans, a gentleman with whom I had to transact some public business. And here I cannot refrain from saying that Mr. Dorsey, who had then been but recently appointed Collector, had, by his indefatigable industry, won the esteem of all who had done business with him; and for the interest he exhibited in forwarding me in my preparation for my journey to Mexico, I shall ever feel grateful.

Through Mr. D. I was informed that the schooner Amazon was the only vessel in port taking in freight, bound for Vera Cruz, and would sail upon the evening of the 9th inst. I therefore did not hesitate, through the house of Messrs. Capdervill & Cucullu, who were owners of the schooner, to secure my passage; and having completed all of my other arrangements in the city, I accordingly, upon the evening of the 9th, that having been the appointed time for the sailing of the Amazon, sent my baggage aboard of her, where I soon followed.

Upon my arrival on deck of the little vessel, for it was only of ninety tons burthen, the captain being absent, the

mate, a stupid looking fellow, conducted me into the cabin, a place six feet by ten in size; and, as I have since imagined, fearing that he would have to give up his own berth to either myself or some other passengers of the Amazon, at once inquired of me if I had consulted the captain as to where I was to sleep; at the same time pointing to the right hand, and saying that that was the captain's berth, and informing me that that was his, to the opposite, on the left. After thanking the mate for his kind intelligence, and declining all intention of depriving either himself or the captain of their berths, he then invited me into the aft cabin, or ladies' apartment, as he called it, at the same time showing me a low small door on the left, whilst he proceeded to open one on the right. I accepted his invitation, by stooping about one half, and passing through the door to the stern of the schooner. The kind and polite mate unnecessarily invited me to take a seat, for it was impossible to have occupied any other than an inclined or sitting posture. The mate having located himself opposite to me, in a most ludicrous manner began to expostulate upon the mode of sea travelling, and was winding up his lucid and, as he thought, interesting description of a life upon the sea, by informing me that the apartment we then occupied was the most desirable of any aboard the vessel, and was exclusively designed for the ladies; although at the moment I could not discover a particle of bed or bedding, but, to the contrary, the little place seemed to be crammed with kegs of crackers, demijohns, old clothing, besides many other articles of ship stores; and as the mate was continuing to say, that, as he had no doubt but that I was a gentleman, he should not, on his part, hesitate to put me in with the ladies, if there should be any, to take passage on board of the Amazon. However, it happened that just at that moment, when I had concluded that I was destined to be obliged to lodge with the ladies, in so small a chamber, the good and merry little Captain Harding came hastily down the stairway of the gen-

tlemen's cabin, and called aloud for his mate in a true seamanlike manner. Mr. Holmes appeared to be as much alarmed as confused, and hesitatingly responded to his superior officer; and as the mate was making his exit from the ladies' apartment into the gentlemen's cabin, the captain demanded the reason of his coming out of that place? when Mr. Holmes informed him that he was only showing one of the passengers the berths of the ladies' cabin, so that he might make choice of one previous to any of them coming on board. Capt. Harding seemed to be exasperated at what the mate had said—and remarked, that the ladies, dear things, had always been welcome to his berth, as it was the best aboard the Amazon. "There, Sir," turning to myself, who by this time was standing in the gentlemen's cabin, "you shall have my berth, Sir, as it has the only good feather bed aboard, and I shall sleep in yours, mate: so that you had better be looking out in time for a choice berth in the ladies' cabin, hah!" Capt. Harding then called his steward, and ordered him to spread the table with wines, sardines, cheese, crackers, and cigars; and a jolly time myself and Mr. Duncan, who had by this time arrived, and the only other passenger, had with the merry little Captain Thomas Harding.

It was not until 5 o'clock in the evening, that the steamer Arkansas took the Amazon in tow. The steamer had at each side of her a large ship, and the Amazon constituted the sixth in number of the schooners that were fastened by long cables to the stern of the Arkansas. The tow having then secured its full complement of vessels, it proceeded down the Mississippi river; and a hard time we had of it, for we had not been under way more than two hours before the fog became so dense that the tow had to cast anchor, and was unable to make head before daylight the following morning, when we raised steam and started; but again, at 9 o'clock in the evening, we were stopped by the fog, being about twenty-five miles from the Balize;

and at half-past 6 o'clock, on the following morning, the mate of the Amazon, Mr. Holmes, informed the mate of the Arkansas that the tow was adrift, and told him to get steam up as soon as possible; and owing to the mismanagement of the tow-boat, in the hurry and alarm of the moment, a backward revolution was given to the wheel, which caused the steamer and one of the ships to come astern upon our broadside, and crowded the Amazon hard upon the bank, which broke our starboard rail abreast the mainmast, and four of the stauncheons and bulwarks, strained our main rigging, broke our larboard cat-head bow-rail, carried away our jib-stay, and caused us to sustain several other lighter damages forward. As for myself, I had not at that hour arisen, yet from the forcibleness of the concussion of the tow against our vessel, I was violently thrown from my berth on to the floor of the cabin, where indeed I did not tarry, but recovering myself I hastened on deck, where luckily I had just arrived in time to witness, for the first time, a sea captain in a passion; and I can with truth say, that I had no idea that so small a man as Captain Harding had as strong a pair of lungs, or such fluency of language. The Captain of the Arkansas requested the Captain of the Amazon to let go the hawser; but the angry little Harding peremptorily refused; saying that he should not let it go until the steamer had hauled his windlass and foremast out of his vessel, for he did not think of being left in distress. However, the Captain of the Arkansas ordered his men to cut the hawser, and the Amazon swung round, whilst the tow was getting out her anchors, which being done, the Amazon heaved the hawser again, and was towed by her about five miles; but the steamer getting along so slowly with but one wheel, the other having become disabled, Capt. Harding thought it best to cut off from her, and accordingly we made sail for the Balize, which we reached on the 11th inst.; and, notwithstanding the schooner had received considerable damage,

yet I determined to proceed on my voyage with the brave little Captain of the Amazon.

Upon my arrival at the Balize, it was with much regret that I learned that Mr. John Duncan would go no farther; for I found, on my short acquaintance with him, a most interesting travelling companion. Mr. Duncan had won my friendly feelings, and I had hoped that the tedium of a sea voyage would have been whiled away in the pleasant society of a fellow countryman. It is to those alone whose misfortune, or peculiar condition, can with deep sensibility feel the solace of friendship, which agreeably to the common acceptation of the word, as the poet has called it "but a name;" and as an unremembered author, I think, remarks, "The hopes that are formed but to be disappointed; the disappointments which are in reality blessings; the longings for that which would prove destructive; the joys that kill, and the sorrows that make alive, can only be condoled with and enjoyed alone, but by the participation of friendship." I am not one of those who believe that the better feelings of the human heart should be alienated from his fellow beings, because there are some false friends; but, to the contrary, think that there is much reward in even a casual or partial unison with others; although, ultimately, the object of our love or friendship should prove false or coquetish. It therefore cannot be surprising that I, with much lively sensibility, bade adieu to my friend, for he was the only American of whom I could at that time take leave; and, in doing so, I felt that the last link had been broken between myself and my fellow citizens of the United States.

True to the adage, that the "loss of one is the gain of another," for I perceived the captain, who had gone ashore, returning, having in his boat two strangers, whom I hoped were passengers, and indeed, it resulted in the fact that when they came on board, one of them, Mr. James Duplessis, was bound for Mexico. All being on board, and

the pilot waiting, the Amazon weighed anchor, and we again sailed for the Gulf, by the way of the N. E. Pass. When we had arrived there, a most singular phenomenon was to be witnessed; for as the Mississippi river, which had for more than two thousand miles irresistibly swept every thing before it, mingling in its muddy and rapid current alike the forest and the "terra firma," yet as it met its mother ocean it was, with a degree of modesty unexpected—for just where the river mouthed against the sea, there seemed to be a perfect line of demarcation between the dark waters of the river, and the clear, deep, blue, salt element; notwithstanding the river came rushing, as long as confined between banks, with bounding wave and foaming surge, yet as it breasted the sea, all was calm and tranquil; for the waters of the mighty deep held it back as but a thing of nothing, and the salt flood of the Gulf seemed to spurn an union with its kindred element of the river, for it could not be perceived just at the juncture, that there was a mingling of the two; but the pilot informed me that the current was supposed to be the strongest at the bottom of the river, and, by that means, was lost in the ocean.

At the mouth of the N. E. Pass, the Amazon again cast anchor, for there the pilot, Capt. John Brown, was to part with us; as also Dr. G. A. Bernard, who had accompanied his friend, Mr. Duplessis, thus far; likewise, Mr. Duncan, who was to return with the Doctor, in Capt. Brown's boat.

As on this occasion there were more than myself to take leave of friends and fellow countrymen, some time was spent in many parting words, and aspirations for a happy and safe voyage. At length, the wine glass having passed around, and as Captain Brown had, in a most cordial manner, shaken my hand, and turned to descend the side of the vessel to his boat, which was alongside, the captain, from some unperceived cause, was precipitated head foremost overboard into the sea. He was long out of sight, and to us all it seemed an age; at length all observed the troubling

of the water, and with animated hopes we expected to behold the Captain; but suddenly our joy was chagrined by the appearance of a huge monster of a Porpoise, who, rising almost out of the water, and giving one of his well known rotary evolutions, again disappeared. But Captain Brown did not tarry longer, for no sooner had the Porpoise been lost to our sight than the Captain rose to the surface, and, as I at that moment caught his eye, I never shall forget the expression of despair depicted upon his countenance. My friend, Mr. John Duncan, having leaped from the deck of the Amazon into the pilot boat, grasped the captain with his right hand and lifted him on board. Captain Brown, being saved from a watery grave, remarked that, notwithstanding he had fallen overboard, he had waked up the largest Porpoise that he had ever seen; and again, an affectionate leave having been taken, the Amazon weighed anchor, and spread her canvass to a fair wind. In a few hours we were carried beyond the sight of land.

We had been at sea but three days, when it was with much regret I perceived that my accommodating little Captain Harding was confined to his bed, from severe indisposition, and my time was mainly occupied in watching his sick couch, which afforded me much pleasure, as the deportment of the captain so entirely differed from what I had understood to be the character of sea captains; and I could not consent that a polite and good man should suffer in hours of extremity. But as I occasionally felt some symptoms of sea-sickness, by confinement below, it was my habit, in accompaniment with Mr. Duplessis, a very intelligent and agreeable gentleman, from the city of New Orleans, in the lapse of the evening to sit on deck, for at that hour the parching sun had lost half its power, and the delightful sea-breeze was most congenially refreshing to the traveller prisoned in so small a compass as we had to occupy.

It was on the lovely evening of the 15th inst., when seated on the deck as above described, the wind continuing fair,

and the Amazon rapidly splitting the waves, that I cast my eyes around upon the broad expanse of waters that encircled me, and then to the heavens above, when my attention was fixed upon an extended cloud far to the westward, and so perfect was the representation that, in the forgetfulness of the moment, I really imagined that I beheld the Blue Ridge mountain, with its two high peaks of Otter; and, as I looked upon the view, my bosom not only glowed with admiration, but was filled with joy at an aspect familiar to me from my earliest infancy—and I could but exclaim, "Behold the Blue Ridge mountain; my own native scenery!" My exclamation attracted the attention of all who were near me, and as neither passenger nor crew had ever beheld the beautiful sight of that lovely mountain, I was called on to describe the resemblance; and at once, with an eagerness that would have surprised any individual familiar with the mountains of Virginia, I commenced the task. But, before completing the description, my attention was arrested from my delightful theme by the increased violence of the wind, accompanied by that whizzing, whistling sound in its passage through the rigging of the vessel, which to a landsman is not only startling, but really makes his hair stand on end. The mate having given the alarm, by shouting out "a Norther," a storm much more destructive than any other wind that sweeps the Mexican Gulf, and which is always periodical in the months of October and November. My attention having been thus diverted, and feeling filled with apprehensions, I at once determined to go below, discovering as I did that I was in much danger, it then being night, by the swinging of the boom, as well as by the sweeping of the tackling of the vessel over the deck; and that intention was also hastened by the sudden heavy fall of rain. And thus, but a few minutes previous, little did I think that, in the playfulness of my thoughts, whilst resembling a cloud to a mountain, it was pregnant with a storm so soon to be avalanched upon us. Having reached

the cabin, I soon felt my sickening sensations returning, by the increased and more violent motion of the vessel, and I accordingly climbed into my berth, for repose always relieved me from any nauseating feelings I might have experienced from sea-sickness. I had not long occupied my berth, when by the activity evinced by the crew, as well as from the violence with which the angry waves would beat against the sides of the vessel, that a storm of no ordinary character was raging. After I had listened some time to the loud and quick commands of the mate, that personage at length appeared in despair, and informed Captain Harding that a Norther was raging, and that he would be glad if he would come on deck, or else tell him what to do. The captain was at that time laying in his berth beneath my own, where he had been confined for the last three days, from an accidental blow he had received, being so disabled that he could but with difficulty get in and out of it. He, therefore, could only reply to his mate that he must do the best he could, and keep all hands busy. It was not long after the mate had returned to his command, before I was alarmed by hearing all on deck utter the shout of land! land! and the mate soon ordered the long-boat to be lowered. As the crew were busied in obeying the order, and having myself ascended the gangway, it was at that moment exclaimed, "A man overboard!" and the mate in the next instant responded, "He is lost! he is lost! Heave away, men!" I could not but feel the deepest sorrow for the fate of the poor sailor, and again returned to my berth to meet my own, whatever it might be, by the hands of a kind and divine Providence. But by his will we were saved, and the vessel preserved harmless from wind and wave; for as the long-boat had been let down, as a last resort, in case the schooner had been cast ashore, or driven on a rock, the wind by degrees ceased to blow. At the dawn of day as the sailors, by command, proceeded to raise the long-boat, which was still at our side, the silence and so-

lemnity of the occasion evidently demonstrated that poor Will, who was lost, was remembered by all.

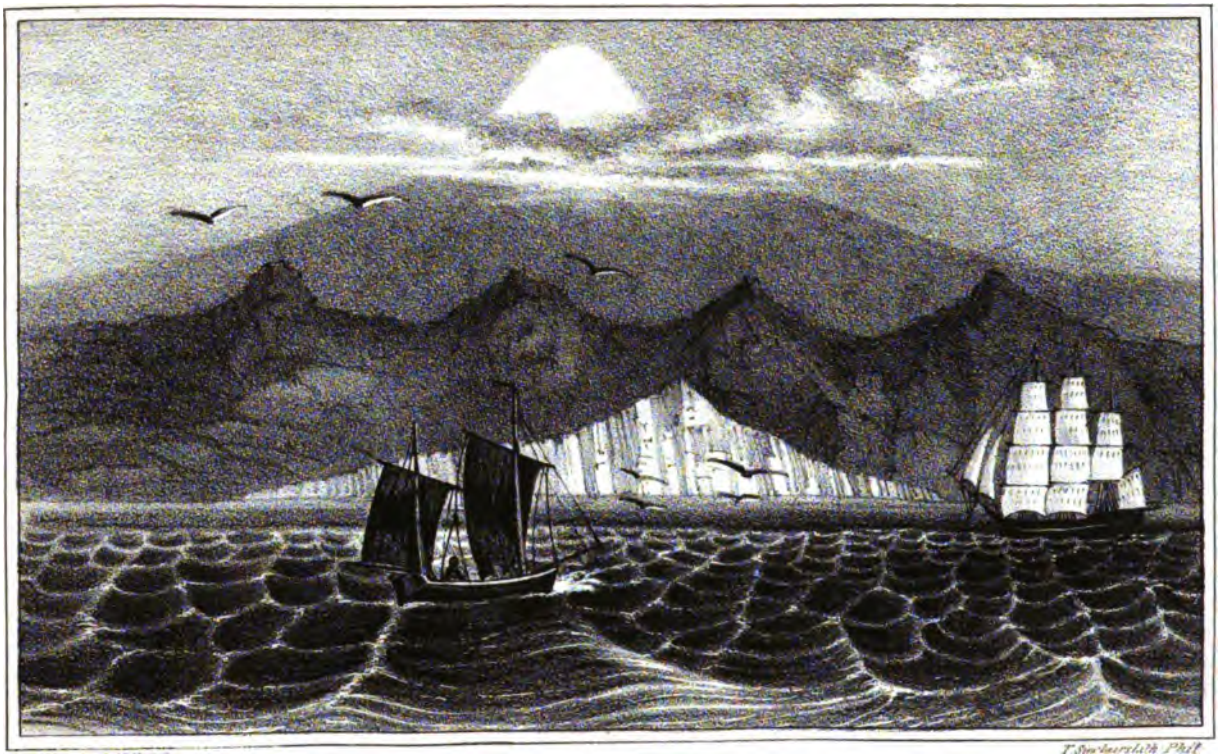
But as the sun ascended out of the sea, and lit up the eastern horizon, sublime indeed was the scene presented to our view; for whilst on the left was discovered a boundless expanse of water—to the right, arose, from the margin of the sea, the lofty range of, as the captain of the Amazon called them, the Perote mountains, which, as I was informed, were of a general elevation of about twelve thousand feet above the level of the Gulf. The mountains presented a dark, blackish appearance, being covered with forest as well as I could at the distance discover, on their lower regions. The scene was a most picturesque and congenial one to me; for whilst, by the light of day, the land seemed an anchor of hope, in the event of a storm, the scenery it presented reverted my thoughts back to my own native hills, so much beloved. Whilst the Gulf of Mexico is bound on the north and west by a flat country, scarcely rising above the level of the ocean, it seems that it is held to its place on the south by a long range of mountains, in a crescent form, and of singular beauty, against which the surging of the waves in their fury is harmless. However, agreeable to the old nautical adage, that "a calm always succeeds a storm," the day succeeding the night of the gale, we were in a state of perfect calm; nor did we make more than twelve miles progress during the period of twenty-four hours. This day was most amusingly spent in harpooning sharks, and also in hooking other fish, much to the joy of our Dutch cook, who, as they were hauled in, would dilate upon their specific qualities, explaining why the one was better for soup, whilst the other should be for the pan or broil.

On the 17th inst., although the calm continued, yet myself and Mr. Duplessis were richly repaid for all the delay, inconveniences and dangers we had encountered by having our attention called, on the morning of the day in question, to the magnificent view of the perpetually snow-capped

Orizava, lying west of Vera Cruz; lat. 19 12, long. 96 08, and said by some to rise to a height of about 22,895 feet above the level of the sea. The Orizava, in its sublimity of aspect, can neither be imagined nor described, yet the impression it had upon my mind was that its lofty summit was the most beautiful scene of nature I had ever beheld.

The morning was clear and cloudless, in consequence of the calm of the preceding twenty-four hours, and it was therefore that, at a distance of forty miles from land, we had the incomprehensible and beautiful view of the hoary height of the Orizava. To picture the scene so that the imagination could encompass its many beauties and grandeur, would be an undertaking beyond the most graphic powers of any pencil or pen; and, therefore, it is reasonable to conclude that I have no intention of impeaching the fancy of the reader, who will excuse me when I say that the view, as presented to me, seemed to be a vast pile of mountains rising immediately from the margin of the sea, one above the other, of variegated heights and formations of peaks, covered by the deepest green vegetation, and that, too, perpetual; but, pre-eminently rising above them all, the eternally snow-capped monarch of mountains, in all the sublimity of grandeur, appeared in lofty magnificence to dazzle back the rays of the sun, reflecting, from its exceeding purity of whiteness, glittering gems of the most resplendent brightness, far above the comparatively diminutive aspirations of other lofty summits, or the rude and ambitious footsteps of inquiring man.

After we had for nearly two days been becalmed, in full view of the Orizava, on the morning of the 19th inst., a delightful trade wind, so called by the sailors, sprang up, and again put our fast-sailing little schooner in merry motion, by rapidly plunging it against the waves, and making it but a trifle to mount the stoutest of them. As evening approached, I observed the captain taking an observation with his spy-glass, and, on inquiring of him if he could look into port,



A VIEW AT SEA OF THE SNOW-CAPPED PEAK OF ORIZAVA.

he smilingly handed me the glass, saying, "There, look for yourself." When I had taken the instrument, after spying a few times to the right and left, the light-house and the Castle of San Juan de Ulloa fell full upon my sight; and, raising it a little higher, the walls of the city, the cupolas, domes, and high towers of both church and cathedral plainly informed me that the much-desired port of Vera Cruz was in full view. Upon being satisfied that we were about to enter the destined haven, which, on one occasion at least, had been despaired of by me, I did not lose time, although the sea was rough, in making my face acquainted with my razor, to which it had been a total stranger for the last seven days, and in opening my trunk for the last time, until it should pass through the Custom-house; for at a distance we could perceive a pilot boat belting the breakers, upon which were visible several wrecks, which lay between us and the island of Sacrificios. To myself who, abroad, had never before witnessed the boarding by a pilot, it was an interesting sight. The boat was small and manned only by the pilot and a boy; it had to make a circuit of about two miles to reach us, whilst the Amazon would have to sail scarcely one; and as the wind was high, and the boat light, it seemed to skim the water with a swiftness equivalent to a plumed arrow shot from an Indian bow. As the pilot came alongside the schooner, I was much amused by the declaration of our cook, who was a Dutchman, exclaiming that, if the pilot belonged to him, he would be certain of making his fortune, by exhibiting the man as the baboon of his race. Indeed the pilot to me was a curiosity, for added to his naturally dark and sun-burnt features, the long glossy hair of his head, perfectly black, besides the grizzly-looking beard that covered his chin and mouth, in tom-puss fashion, circling up to his eyes, made the man appear more like a monster who had strayed from the frozen regions of the Orizava, or like the grizzly bear of the North, who had ventured to sea upon an iceberg in search of prey. The pilot being the first

Mexican I had ever seen, I felt myself much disappointed, if he was a fair specimen, from what I had imagined their appearance to be; however, I afterwards learned that he was an Indian.

At six o'clock, P. M., we entered the port of Vera Cruz, which is of difficult access, and were safely anchored under the frowning guns of the Castle San Juan de Ulloa; and, as I cast my eyes along its battlements, the many marks of French cannon balls were yet plainly visible, being the remaining admonitions to Santa Anna of Louis Philippe's displeasure, and chastisement of French wrongs. Mr. Duplessis and myself at once determined to spend the night on shore, and as there are no wharves at Vera Cruz, we were politely tendered a small boat, by the captain of a Mexican steamer, as that of the Amazon was employed in placing the anchor of the schooner; our baggage, therefore, having been transferred to the boat, and having taken seats ourselves, we were landed in quick time, at a distance of about three hundred yards upon the Mole, which is extended into the water about fifty yards, from immediately opposite the only gate of the city fronting the sea. The Mole, as is the case always, upon the arrival of a vessel, was crowded with people from every clime, as well as by citizens, sailors, and soldiers of the city; and to me, who had for the first time landed upon the *terra firma* of a foreign country, the sight was striking and novel; for at one glance I beheld the black colour of the African—the tawny complexion of the Indian—the brunette of the Spaniard—as well as the fairer hue of other Europeans; and it did appear to me that had I been at the Tower of Babel, when the confusion of languages took place, my ears could not have been saluted by a greater jargon of sounds, or my eyes with the sight of so much variety of costume; and, for a mixed multitude, it surprised me to behold such a marked indifferent expression of countenance and mien, of which I shall hereafter again speak; defying any stranger to tell who were the Mexicans, other-

wise than from the uniforms of the soldiers. Although the Mexicans are more or less dark complexioned, yet there are a goodly number of people in Mexico who are of pure Castilian and Hidalgo blood of old Spain, as well as descendants of other Europeans and North Americans; and, therefore, the darker coloured portion of the population are the Indian, and the consequent shades produced from the admixture with the Indian; however, at the same time, there is no blood so pure in Mexico, but what is in some degree mixed with the native aboriginal Indian. The ancient Mexicans had the honour of planting their own race in Spain; for the "beautiful princess Tecuichpo is commemorated by the Spaniards, since from her, by marriage, are descended some of the illustrious families of their own nation."

In consequence of the lateness of the hour when Mr. Duplessis and myself landed upon the Mole, it was impossible for us to pass our trunks through the custom-house; we therefore repaired to the "*Casa de la Diligencia*," the Diligence House, the principal hotel kept in the place. Its landlord was a fine looking Irishman, by the name of Bell. It was our determination to spend our first night in Vera Cruz, in quietness and repose, so that we might on the following morning feel refreshed from our sea-voyage, and thereby enjoy our ramble and the view of the city more; but how sadly were we disappointed; for the bells of the public buildings, that were constantly ringing in honour of a saint, as I was informed, perpetuated their clack-a-clack, and we had not more than fairly retired to bed by the hour of nine, than the loud report of a big gun from the Castle was heard; then followed the ringing of all the bells of the cathedral and churches, which produced the most deafening peal that had ever stunned my senses—this was followed by the beating of drums and the blowing of fifes and trumpets, and for the balance of the night, as if intended for our distress, *besides the diligent biting of fleas and mosquitoes*, we were kept awake by the crying of the watch-word of the

sentinels, who were posted at every corner of the street, two of whom had their positions near to us; and for the first night, notwithstanding our anticipated luxury of sleeping in a bed on shore, I was kept listening to the stentorian voices of the sentinels crying every half hour—*Ave Maria purissima, los dos y media serenis*, &c.

The following morning being Sunday, the 20th instant, Mr. Dimond, the American Consul for the port of Vera Cruz, a polite gentleman, and withal very accommodating, marked for his business habits, did me the favour of calling on me, and invited me to take a stroll with him to view the emporium of the great mart of Mexico, denominated by its founder, Hernando Cortes, in 1519, Valla Rica de la Vera Crus—the rich town of the true cross—and so long as the Spaniards were its owners, it was in truth the rich town of the New World. The city of Vera Cruz is enclosed by a continued wall, built of coral stone and brick, stuccoed on the outer and inner sides. The streets, running north and south, east and west, are narrow, and all paved with stone, shipped from the United States. The town is laid off in squares, and the houses are a solid mass of buildings, covering the whole squares. When you have seen one house in Vera Cruz you have seen them all, for there is a perfect sameness in their architecture. The houses are built of stone or brick, and stuccoed on the outside, which is white-washed or painted. Each building being of a square form, has its paved or flagged court within, and a flight of steps conducts you to the corridor of each story, the corridors extending around the building, as often as there are stairs, are broad and paved with either brick or tile, and strongly cemented together. The doors of the rooms all open to the corridors, and the floors of the rooms are also of tile, and with very few exceptions of Mosaic marble. The floors, by the most tastefully cultivated people, are either painted, or covered with oil cloth or carpets. It is but seldom that windows are seen in the first stories of buildings; and when

perceived they are strongly barred with iron grating. There are no windows to the outer walls of the upper stories, excepting those fronting the streets; the greater number of windows to the buildings are from the inner walls, looking out upon the corridors. Generally, to each door and window fronting the street, there is a short jutting platform, railed and barred with iron, upon which the inhabitants can sit or stand for observation or airing; and often have I been reminded, when observing the inhabitants seated on these platforms, in their silent, demure and solemn gravity, looking in a most careless and spiritless manner, upon all that might be transpiring around them, of a Beaver Village, where here and there some dark, grave beaver of fine fur would be sunning in his window, not knowing that happiness or misery dwelt in the breasts of any other creature but itself, and when satiated with looking and sunning, dive back again into his strong hole.

The houses of the city, without exception, are flat-roofed; the roofs being covered with tile or brick, and strongly cemented, and thus rendered fire and water proof; however, fire is the least of all the dangers that a Mexican anticipates to befall his house, for it is universally without a chimney. On the tops of the buildings are built observatories, which, at a distance improves the view of the town. In front of the Casa de la Diligencia, is a Plaza, or public square, of about two acres of ground, and directly opposite the Casa de la Diligencia is what was once the Palace Royal, but now a barracks and a prison. The public buildings, and especially the churches, are of stupendous dimensions and magnificently finished within.

There is a religious building in Vera Cruz, of Jesuit origin, noted for its massiveness and the great strength of its walls, for the Jesuits were not only remarkable for their ambitious grasping after power, but also for fortifying themselves in whatever they undertook. The elegance of one private building above another, can only be discovered by

entering into the court of the house, as but seldom do they make much outside show. On some of the squares, the portals extend over the side-walks, and thus the citizens in the streets are protected from the inclemency of the weather, and the intense heat of the sun. I was not in any of the houses at Vera Cruz but those occupied by foreigners, and I did not observe any material difference, as to the manner in which they were furnished, from those of the United States, saving that the corridors were hung around with cages filled with many coloured birds, and whilst, indeed, some were sweetly warbling notes divine, yet the intolerable jargon of the parrot, with his ear-piercing whistling and squalling, entirely destroyed the melody of the other beautifully feathered songsters.

There was also one other thing that invariably attracted my attention wherever I went, whether in public or private buildings, viz: a brass urn, called a *Brazero*, in which were heaped live coals of fire, and as an Englishman of poetic imagination remarked, " that eternal fires were kept burning in those brazeros in imitation of the ancient Mexicans, who kept perpetual fires in their temples in honour of the sun;" however, no one could long remain in ignorance of their purpose, as the inhabitants never passed in or out without first touching the end of their paper or tobacco cigars, to a live coal of the brazeros, and thus, by that means, keep the eternal fires burning also at their mouths, whilst two streams of perpetually curling smoke were issuing from their nostrils; for the Mexican first swallows the smoke, and then ejects it through his nose, believing it to be a very beautiful sight.

The health of Vera Cruz is perhaps worse than that of any other place on the habitable globe, and it is calculated that one-fifth of its inhabitants annually perish; for, from the month of June until October, the Mexican Vomito has a reign of terror, carrying to the tomb the old and young, and but seldom sparing the foreigner. The sickness of

Vera Cruz is attributed to the increased intensity of the sun's heat, reflected from the high white sand-hills, that overlook the town, as also from the poisonous vapour which arises from the stagnant waters of the lakes and swamps which surround the city. The venomous insects that infest that hot region add likewise in no small degree, by never leaving the inhabitants to repose, and constantly causing feverish excitement and irritation, to promote disease; yet, it is asserted in history that, previous to the discovery of Mexico, and long after its settlement, the mortality as now known at Vera Cruz had not its existence; and thus, but in another instance, exhibiting the fact that, wherever the white man erects his habitation and plants civilization, pestilence and bilious maladies are his consequent accompaniments. However, the Northers at Vera Cruz, like the frost of New Orleans, purify the atmosphere, and dissipate disease. The Northers, as before stated, are periodical, in the months of October and November, and notwithstanding their destructive tendency upon the sea, yet they have a highly beneficial effect on land, breaking down the luxuriency of vegetation on the coast, and driving before them all infection which the intense heat of summer may have taken from the decomposition of the vegetable kingdom; and thus it can be easily perceived that nature, in her economy, must have designed that as the frost never falls upon the plains of Mexico to kill malaria and destroy green vegetation, those north winds so much dreaded at sea, are sent in blessing to the landsmen.

Soon after my arrival at Vera Cruz, I gave to the servant who attended my room some clothing to be washed; but he soon returned with my bundle, bringing with him a German lady of the establishment as his interpreter, and informed me that the washwoman refused to take the clothes, unless I would release her from all responsibility if a Norther should carry them away; whereupon assuming the hazard, on the following day, upon short notice, the winds came, and scattered my clothing like kites in the air, some to the country,

and some to the sea, and some perhaps to needy Mexicans. The inhabitants, on the first appearance of the coming storm, are compelled immediately to tightly bar their doors and windows, stopping up the key-holes, and every other crevice, and to keep them so, long after the Norther ceases to blow, to prevent light articles of their houses from flying away, as also their eyes from being put out by the sand thickly floating in the air.

A French gentleman, Mons. P. Thuillier, described to me the terrible havocs of a Norther, as seen by himself from his own window, in which nine vessels perished, one of which was driven against the walls of the city, whilst another was upset upon the beach, and on the following day, when she was scuttled, six live men, to the joy and surprise of the wreckers, were disembowelled from the schooner, which was half filled with water.

CHAPTER III.

Dined with Mr. Dimond. Description of ruins. Isla de los Sacrificios. War-god Huitzilopotchili. The Mexicans believe that the period had arrived for the return of their deity. Cannibal priests. Arrival of Cortes. Montezeuma's embassy. Vespus. Marina. Arrest of four Americans and two Dutchmen. Spanish treasure. Consent of Santa Anna to search for money. Arrest of Capt. Place. Four days in Vera Cruz. Departure from Vera Cruz. The Ladrones. Description of them. Duplicity of the Mexicans. Santa Anna's wooden leg.

Mr. Dimond, with whom I dined on Sunday, the first day that I spent in Vera Cruz, was a native of the State of Connecticut; but his lady was a Virginian, which fact I was not apprised of until I had remarked to him, whilst at his house, the striking resemblance I discovered in a portrait likeness that hung in his drawing-room, of Dr. Parker, formerly of Virginia; when the consul informed me, that the old doctor was his father-in-law ;—a most singular coincident. Mr. Dimond, for many years previous to his removal to Vera Cruz, had been the American Consul at Port au Prince, and in his conversation with me unhesitatingly said, that it was his conviction, resulting from his long residence in Hayti, that the slaves of the South, in the United States, were happier, and better provided for, than the blacks of that island, with their boasted freedom. Dinner being over, I accepted his polite invitation to accompany him in a walk to the *Passio*, which name, as I understood, means a drive or promenade.

The city of Vera Cruz, previous to the revolution, contained about twenty-five thousand inhabitants; but, distressing to tell, it does not now possess more than about four thousand. The general appearance of the town shows great decay and dilapidation; for the many scourges, by war and the decline of commerce, resulting from a system of government policy, which we shall hereafter explain,

has reduced the once flourishing port of Mexico into a heap of ruins, and a by-word for civilized nations.

Upon my reaching the Passio, which is beyond the westward gate of the city, my soul was pained at the ruin and waste that I there beheld. Much of the beauty of the Passio itself yet remained, for a large portion of its pavement, made of smooth and shiny bitumen—its many seats and circles—are yet perfect, affording the visiter much recreation, while strolling along its walks, as, at the same time, he feels refreshed by the cooling sea-breeze, which, at the hour of evening, always, most congenially, wafts in gentle zephyrs over it. But how sadly changed the scene since the old Dons of Spain are no longer there to improve and dignify the place. In vain the visiter looks for the flower-gardens, and the groves of orange, lemon and cocoa-nut trees, as, also, the pine-apple plant, filling the air with fragrance, as well as the fountains of water which skirted the Passio on both sides.

This delightful walk once pierced the centre of a broad street, bounded, on either hand, for half a mile, by rows of beautiful buildings—where are they now?—tumbled into ruins;—for there can be beheld the broken columns and fallen dome of a proud and lofty church, where once pealed the notes divine of the solemn organ. Indeed, ruin and decay may be seen in all,—in whatever direction the eyes may be turned, literally are beheld, "walls bowed, and crushed seats." How impressively does the scene of this place remind the looker-on of the vanity and futility of all human things; and how melancholy the reflection to him who can stand on the spot and meditatively contemplate over the falling dwellings and palaces; where once the Spanish *belle*, with her tuned guitar, sweetly warbled her touching notes in the ears of her lover;—falling into heaps of mouldering rubbish,—

"The crush'd relics of their vanquished might,"

a retreat and shelter for sheep and swine; or else, made places for the butchering and the drying of meat. I am persuaded, from what I have learned of the history of Mexico, and all I have seen of Vera Cruz, that no greater calamity could have befallen any people, than the acquisition, by the Mexicans, of their independence, and the expulsion of the old Spaniards from her dominions.

At the end of the Passio my attention was attracted by the sound of music, and, on approaching a falling building, which yet had standing a portion of its portal, supported by pillars, was seen a motley crowd; one of the men, a Mexican, was strumming on an indifferent Spanish guitar, while a negro was also thumbing a kind of harpsichord peculiar to the country. As the music was going on, a woman and a man were dancing, what I was informed to be a fandango. The woman wore the hat of her partner, and the dance consisted in a lazy shuffle to a slow tune. At a period of every five or ten minutes, the woman would commence a plaintive ditty, in which the whole crowd would join in chorus, and, what would otherwise have rendered the music agreeable, was, that the male voices attempted to imitate the female, and produced such a shrill, hideous sound, the like of which, for music, I had never before heard more ridiculous. Upon my inquiring the reason of the lady's wearing the hat of the gentleman, I was informed that whenever an individual desired to dance with a lady, he would first present her with his hat, and, if she thus accepted his invitation, he could not again obtain his hat without redeeming it by paying one dollar; and in this way, I was told, the loafers of Vera Cruz devoted every Sabbath evening.

Upon continuing my walk further on the green turf of the level plain, a small building, with a belfry, and a high wall, encircling a large plat of ground, all of an antique and decayed appearance, struck my view. This was the cemetery, whose ready portals were continually receiving

so large a portion of the human family. About midway between myself and the cemetery, I discovered the habit of a priest, and about him were some six or eight individuals, and I was informed, that at that place the priests were in the custom of meeting the corpse brought out of the city for interment, as to go too often into the cemetery was considered to expose too much the life of the holy father, and therefore there performed the last solemn duties of ablution, and of sprinkling dust and ashes over the remains of a departed fellow-being returning to his mother earth.

My mind, dissatisfied with all the objects presented to my view, my thoughts could but revert, with the *Isla de los Sacrificios* in broad aspect of the Passio, to the early history of the country. In 1518, Grijalva had the distinguished fame of being the first European who set foot on Mexican soil, and, at the island above mentioned it was, where the Spaniard first beheld the trickling blood of human hecatombs on the altars of the Mexican war-god Huitzilopotchili, and from the ensanguined temples erected for his worship, perpetually ascended the smoke of human sacrifices in every town of the empire. How vast, then, the destruction of human life! In the mystic legends of the Mexicans, as to one of their tutelary deities, the god of the air, Quetzalcoatl, prepared the way by which, alone, a handful of Spaniards were enabled to overthrow a vast and powerful empire. This air god, doomed to exile by a superior divinity, was tall in stature, with a white skin, long dark hair, and a flowing beard. Seated in his wizzard skiff, made of serpents' skins, he embarked upon the Mexican gulf, to glide over the great waters of the fabled land of Hapallaw. But, previous to his departure, he promised his friends that himself and his descendants would again visit a country which he so much loved. And divine will did so provide, in the abundance of time, that the fair regions of Mexico should no longer be doomed to the loathsome and degrading practices of cannibalism, to satiate the bloody and depraved

appetite of a frantic and bigoted priesthood. And, as an elegant author has remarked, it is "strange that in every country the most fiendish passions of the human heart have been those kindled in the name of religion."

It happened that, in the reign of Montezeuma, the Mexicans were generally impressed with the opinion that the time had arrived for their god Quetzalcoatl to return—that deity so unlike the aspect of the Indian—for, with hair not so black, with fair skin and flowing beard, was a god incarnate, of person superior in dignity of mien to themselves; and, when compared to their other deities, possessed a beauty and a pureness entirely differing from the hideous appearance of other divinities, to appease the wrath of whom, it eternally required the smoking hearts of thousands of their Indian race to send up their barbarous and superstitious oblations to heaven, as the dear prize of their homage and devotion to them. Not so with Quetzalcoatl, for he had been their benefactor when residing amongst them, and, in the plenitude of his goodness, taught them the use and the art of manufacturing metals, a shining helmet of which he wore upon his head. He also instructed them how to cultivate their fields in maize, a single ear of which was a load for one man. In fine, this god had been their benefactor in every thing that was useful, or which contributed to their comfort and happiness: therefore it was with mingled hopes and fears that the Mexicans looked with confidence for the appearing of him who was to guide them in the ways of knowledge, and to more exalted spheres of felicity.

The convictions of the Mexicans, in the time of Montezeuma, that the period had arrived for the return of their deity, and, fortunately for the Spaniards, that opinion had been strengthened, just previously to their landing on the shores of Mexico, by the great lake of Tezcuco of the valley of Anahuac, without wind or earthquake, being suddenly tossed in boisterous waves, and overflowing its banks,

sweeped from before its tide many of the houses of the city of Mexico; then a turret of the great temple took fire, without the cause of the lightning flash, or the hand of the incendiary, and defied alike the power of water to extinguish its flames, or the arm of man to arrest its progress; and then, the before unseen, shining orbs in the heavens, and a vivid sheet, or flood of fire, that spread along the broad expanse of the horizon to the east, rising to a pyramid, and tapering to a point as it ascended to its zenith, and at the same time voices of invisible spirits, or the whisperings of their gods, was heard in mournful and mysterious wailings in the air, prognosticating some calamity to their country; or else, the evidences of the gatherings of the wrath of the perturbed spirits of their gods, to break in future time upon the devoted heads of poor Indians.

As Montezeuma, and his subjects, upon the arrival of the Spaniards, had a deep and mystic cloud cast over their spirits, by the troubling of the waters of the lake, and the terrific appearances of the heavens, they could but speedily anticipate the downfall of their empire. Indeed, to the royal Indian monarch, they were the handwriting upon the wall that made Belshazzar's knees smite together; and, to all human ken, were but angry and sublime enunciations of an all-wise overruling providence to an ignorant and bigoted people, that the white man, with thunder and lightning in his hand, was soon to demolish, and hurl from the battlements of their towering temples, the ensanguined deities and insatiate cannibal priests, from the performance of their damned rites, and, in its stead, erect the standard of the cross, from which can be seen the blood of the Lamb which taketh away the sins of the world;—and the terrible fate that overtook the priesthood of Montezeuma should be a monument of warning to those of the present day, of the true God's displeasure with wickedness and abominations.

It was, therefore, under the superstitious presentiments

of Montezeuma, in the latter years of his reign, that Hernando Cortes, on the morning of the 21st April, 1519, landed on the spot where now is the city of Vera Cruz; and, as I cast my eyes over the level plain, and beheld the white sand-hills, formed by the drifting of the sands during the blowing of the northern tornadoes, I could but picture, in my imagination, that I beheld the chivalrous few, under the banner of Castile, and commanded by the intrepid Cortes, encamped upon one of the eminences overlooking the plain below, and the surrounding country; whilst, at the same time, the natives, with presents of gold and flowers in their hands, came flocking in from all parts to behold the wonderful strangers. As they are pondering in their minds, whether or not the beings they beheld were gods, and of the family of Quetzalcoatl, or but mere men like themselves —behold! an embassy from the royal monarch of the land arrives, headed by a noble, Tuehtlile; and, as he touches the earth with his hand, and then raises it to his head—see! he lays at the feet of Cortes, a golden sun, and silver moon, of ponderous weights, besides an hundred loads of rich and precious things of the country. Hear!—the bell has tolled the hour of vespers, and the Spaniards have all fallen to their knees; and, as father Olmedo, with solemn reverence, offers up his supplications to the most high God, the awe-struck natives are amazed at the worship of, to them, the unknown God of the Christians.

The religious services being ended,—see! in what bold relief the lovely Indian interpreter, Marina, whom chance had thrown in the possession of the conquerer, and of whom it is said, that Cortes "first made her his interpreter, then his secretary, and afterwards, won by her charms, his mistress, by whom he had a son, Don Martin Cortes; whom, although distinguished by his parentage, yet the inquisition put him to the rack in the very city won by the sword of his father." Yes, hear her, in the soft, sweet cadence of her voice, so peculiar to the females of her people, inform-

ing the great noble, that Cortes "was the subject of a potent monarch beyond the seas, who ruled over an immense empire, and had kings and princes for his vassals; that, acquainted with the greatness of the Mexican empire, his master had desired to enter into a communication with him, and had sent him as his envoy to wait on Montezeuma with a present, in token of his good-will."—And hear the noble express his "surprise to learn there was another monarch as powerful as Montezeuma," and inquire, "How is it that you have been here only two days, and demand to see the emperor?"—Long did my thoughts thus revel upon the early history of the country, (which, at the present day, although authentic in all its parts, yet, as seen through the vista of time, seems to be but the fabled account of some ingenious romance,) until, at length, admonished by the lateness of the hour, I returned to the city and my lodgings.

Monday morning, the 20th inst., was hailed by me with much satisfaction, as my trunk had to remain locked up in the custom-house all day Sunday; the officers of Vera Cruz refusing to do business on that day, which disposition to keep the Sabbath, in this respect, loudly reflects to their credit.

After breakfast, Mr. Dimond requested the key of my trunk, saying that he would make application for it in person, and I did not hesitate to comply with his kind offer, by accepting the proffered service; for no one can feel comfortable without their wardrobe; and, as my journal, too, was in my trunk, I felt out of employment without it. Mr. Dimond was not long absent before he returned, and informed me, that he had passed my baggage through the hands of the officers of the custom-house, and a laughable time he had of it, he said, in a scramble for my chewing tobacco. I was aware, previous to my going to that port, that the article of tobacco was contraband, but who ever heard of an old Virginian starting on a journey without especially having first provided himself with a few

manufactured lumps of the weed, to stimulate and cheer his imagination, in his absence from friends, and to give his mouth employment, whilst sitting in strange places, for the want of acquaintances with whom to converse. I had intentionally deposited my tobacco on the top of all the other articles in my trunk, to prove thereby, that I had no disposition to smuggle it, and, therefore, no sooner was my trunk opened, than the best quality of that article that had ever come, perhaps, under the inspection of the officers of that port, lay staring them in the face; and no sooner was it seen than the voracious Mexicans laid violent hands on it, and deposited it on a shelf of the store-room.

To this Mr. Dimond made no objections; and the officers not finding any other goods, or more tobacco to seize upon; as they were about to close my trunk, my friend informed them, that the owner of that baggage ate the tobacco which they had taken, and that it was necessary for his comfort that he should have it, which piece of information so surprised them, that if I ate tobacco, they said, I should have it.

However, my friend, Mr. Duplessis, was not so fortunate, for he had to pay eighteen dollars duty on his snuff, for private use. And thus, it seems, that while the Mexican was circling the smoke of his *cigarreto* through his nose, thinking it the only good way to use tobacco, I was amusing myself by chewing my quid, and, at the same time, my New Orleans friend, of French descent, was tickling his olfactory nerves by copious pinches of snuff, to the delightful sneezing and convulsion of his whole system.

On my arrival at Vera Cruz, there was much excitement amongst the good citizens of that place, in consequence of the recent arrest of four Americans and two Dutchmen. These were men who had been deluded into an enterprise, which resulted in some very remarkable facts: and I am indebted to the American consul, who was interposing

his official authority in their behalf, for a history of their unjustifiable confinement.

During the first revolution in Mexico, the old Spaniards were ordered to leave the country, by the revolutionists. A few wealthy persons, who were residents of Vera Cruz, determined that, previous to departing upon their exile, they would bury their gold and valuable plate in some select and secret place, believing, as they did, that the insubordination of the natives would soon be quelled by the royal forces; and, as they could not, with safety, convey it out of Mexico to the unknown place of their destiny, driven, as they were, to seek refuge as best they could, from the homes of their adoption; this party of Spaniards, putting a mutual trust in each other, and with the common hope of again being permitted to reside peaceably at Vera Cruz, buried their treasures on a tract of land, now belonging to Santa Anna, distant from the city about nine miles. A map having been accurately drawn, and a written geography prepared, of the precise location where the secret deposit had been made, the party made safe their retreat from the scenes of revolution and persecution.

Time elapsed, and that too without a mitigation of the decree which expelled the refugees from Mexico, and, ultimately, all the leagued party had deceased in Europe, or the United States, but one, and he, having made his retreat to New Orleans, the map and all the information appertaining to the hidden treasure, on his demise in that city, fell into the hands of an individual who had been intimate with the deceased Spaniard; and that person had employed the romantic adventurers to visit Mexico, and to dig for the hidden wealth, with a promise of a large portion of the products of the discovery, if made. The credulous Americans, upon landing at Vera Cruz, there found Santa Anna in a fret with his countrymen, because they had not cheered him as formerly on his arrival within their walls. The money-hunters unhesitatingly acquainted the dictator with their business,

and requested his permission to search for the hidden treasures, which they informed him were upon his land. Santa Anna, after expressing his want of faith in the narrative of the men, with much kind frankness gave his consent that they should, unmolested, search his premises for their golden expectations, whenever and as long as they pleased.

The foreigners, delighted with their kind reception, and the much-desired privilege granted to them, with thankful hearts, promised the dictator a portion of the profits if successful; and immediately repaired to Mango de Clavo, Santa Anna's *hacienda campus*, and commenced digging upon the spots of ground designated by the map and the written directions. But, to the great dismay of the party, before they had been allowed time to make any satisfactory progress, a band of soldiers came upon them, and, by the warrant of the dictator, arrested all of them, on the charge of their having been sent by the Texian government to *assassinate him;* and that their object was, not to hunt for treasure, but for his blood, which was more precious than mountains of gold. In support of this ridiculous allegation, one of the minions of Santa Anna, who had never seen Texas, and held no correspondence with the executive of that government, as to its secret or avowed intentions, made oath to the charge. Thus there was no remedy for the unfortunate adventurers but to be committed to gaol, where they could indulge their fancies in golden visions.

As for the Mexicans, who ever, in the history of their country, have been accustomed to the secret hand of their government-officers, in the degrading and vile acts of assassination and low stratagem, they were easy to believe that the government of Texas could be guilty of so disgraceful a deed as to commit an act of violence upon the person of the dictator. But, to the contrary, it was the belief of all foreigners in the country, that the charge was only a device of Santa Anna (in which some of his countrymen thought him very smart) to obtain the chart and instructions from

these men, to secure to himself, as it is said he did, eight thousand doubloons, which had been buried by the old Spaniards.

Furthermore, to cap the climax of Santa Anna's perfidy, we give the following account:—Captain Place, a commander of an American merchant ship, who had arrived at Vera Cruz in the ship Scotia, since my own landing, was arrested on the same charge, without the least shadow of proof that he had ever had any intercourse or connection with the Americans who already were committed to prison; but, to the contrary, had never seen them, was also incarcerated in a loathsome and vile prison at Vera Cruz. The object of Captain Place's visit to that city was to collect from the Mexican government the sum of ten thousand dollars, which was due to him, for supplies furnished the Mexican army during the war with Yucatan, in its late and glorious struggle for independence. As it regards the case of the American sea-captain, as I was informed by a highly respectable gentleman of his profession, it was obvious to all, that he had given no provocation whatever for an impeachment to be brought against him, to the effect of his being an accomplice with the Texians, as the dictator was pleased to denominate the American citizens, whom he had charged with a design to assassinate him. And it was thought to be the intention of Santa Anna, thus to pay the debt of Mexico, by forcing Captain Place to purchase his liberty at the dear rate of ten thousand dollars, he not having been able, up to the time of my leaving Mexico, to obtain a trial.

The only comment, which every lover of good faith, among Christian people of every country, can bestow upon such shameful and barbarous conduct, (which the honourable portion of the world, but for the publicity of the facts, will be hard of believing, that one occupying so high a place as Santa Anna could be guilty of,) is, that if the United States cannot, in future, protect its citizens abroad, its na-

tional honour will be for ever tarnished, and its boasted strength prove to be but pompous imbecility.

My stay in Vera Cruz was four days, and on the 23d inst. my Louisiana friend and self united a small allowance of clothing in the same trunk, a small one purchased for the occasion, and designed for immediate uses on the road, and at the city of Mexico, until our baggage should arrive there. We were reduced to the necessity of such a resort, or else hazard the loss of all our trunks by the robbers on the way. We, therefore, with drafts on houses in Mexico in our pockets, called by the Mexicans *libreances*, and but fifteen dollars in hand for expenses, having previously forwarded our trunks by the conductor, and which were to arrive at the city of Mexico in eighteen days from the time of their departure from Vera Cruz, took our leave of the city.

The price of the transportation agreed on, was ten dollars for each trunk. I found that to travel in Mexico, it is necessary to part with your baggage, and but occasionally to meet with it, as you would some dear friend, who would be *so obliging* as to make you an occasional loan, to supply your immediate necessities.

Our names having been entered at the dear rate of fifty dollars per seat in the diligencia, my departure was made, in company with four Americans, two Mexicans, one Belgian, one Irishman and an English lady and her two children. As the time appointed for the diligencia to leave on its journey was eleven o'clock at night, it was a source of much regret to us all, as we would have the more to hazard our lives and property by departing at so late an hour, as the vehicle had been robbed on the three trips previous, almost at the gates of Vera Cruz, on one of which occasions a passenger lost his hand.

Although it was of service to me, as I did not understand the Spanish language, yet I could not but feel diverted when a friend, who had interested himself in my behalf, informed me of the words of command I would receive, if attacked

by the robbers or *Ladrones*, as they are called in that language; which were "*boca baje*," which phrase, being translated into plain English, means "Stick your mouth in the dust;" a peremptory order, indeed, for unoffending travellers to receive, who were about to be stripped of their property; and, if remonstrance or resistance should be offered, their lives also. When the brigands hail the diligencia, the driver instantly comes to a halt, as he well knows, that, if he should crack his whip, and try to make safe his retreat from their murderous designs, (and sad experience has convinced him also by the downfall of others,) his life, on an after occasion, must pay the forfeit; and, therefore, when a halt is called, the poor passengers are invited, by the ladrones, to descend the steps and extend themselves, at full length, with their mouths to the earth; from which position, if they should have the temerity to stir, they must receive either the flat side, or the sharp edge of a broad-sword. But, as we had been promised a double escort of soldiers, by the commandant of the garrison, to protect us from the much dreaded ladrones, we had but little anticipation of being interrupted.

How disagreeable it is to the traveller, wearied and fatigued as he may be, to be deprived of even the pleasure of looking out upon the prospect of the country, without the dreaded idea of beholding land-pirates in ambush, or in the full gallop of pursuit; but how much more disgraceful it is for a government to tolerate, by their neglect to suppress the evil, so dishonourable, unchristian, and criminal as it is, by permitting such things to be so universally practised, not only upon the most public thoroughfares, but throughout the whole vast extent of the Mexican dominions. It is a sin peculiar to themselves, which should cover them with shame and the contempt of the world.

It is a crime which cries aloud to heaven to scourge a nation for their acts of commission and omission; and, as additional evidence of the testimony given by all travellers in

Mexico, and well deserving the attention of the incredulous, who find it difficult to believe that such enormities should not only be most open, but of outrageously frequent occurrence, they have only to be reminded of the notorious robberies committed upon two of the American ministers in a brief space of each other, viz. Mr. Shannon, accredited to the government of Mexico; and Mr. Cushing, returning from China. True, Santa Anna expressed his sorrow for the unfortunate Americans, but his sympathy was as much felt at heart, as are the tears of the crocodile. It would have been more congenial to his avaricious feelings to have felt in his pocket the results of the barbarous transactions, than to have wasted one moment's grief for the unfortunate ministers.

Understanding, as I now do, the duplicity of the Mexicans, and their policy, I should not be surprised if some in power should have known more of Mr. Shannon's robbery than might become them; for all must remember the pendency of the Texian question at that time. But as Santa Anna and his officers are the acknowledged heads of a band of pirates, it cannot be astonishing that he should tolerate such deeds; unless the ladrones should again steal his wooden leg, and throw him in a passion, *as it once happened*, when he caused the robbers to disgorge.

CHAPTER IV.

At 11 o'clock the diligencia in waiting. Two Mexicans on the back seat. Refusal to give it up for a lady. Departure from Vera Cruz. Escort. Sand flies. Drifted sand. Large beetle, Cocuyos. Vera Cruz road, the same that Cortes travelled. Tierra caliente. Varieties of flowers and shrubbery. Sultry heat. Halt of the diligencia at the Rancho. The escort takes leave. The road paved like a street upward of three hundred miles. President, Emperor and Dictator. Numerous bridges. La Puenta del Ray. Breakfast. Romantic and sublime scenery. Santa Anna's new building. First day's ride. Wild scenery. Tierra templada. Stately forest. Varieties of musquite tree. Orizava is not a part of the Perote mountains. Grand view of the Orizava. The country volcanic. Lara. Jalapa. Wealth of the Dictator. The medicine Jalapa. The Plaza. The ladies of Jalapa. Departure from Jalapa. Humid vapours. Houses of seeds, sticks and earth. The aborigines. Tomb of an old Spaniard. Picturesque scenery. The plain of Perote. Andes and Cordilleras. Pastoral country. Pueblos built of sun-burnt brick. Roman Catholic house of worship. The haciendas. Ploughs in Mexico. Two perpetually snow-capped peaks. Arrival at Pueblo. Priests imposing on the people. Cathedral of Pueblo. The mountains covered with large timber. Arrieros. Mules loaded with silver. Valley of Mexico. The promised land. Geography of the valley of Mexico. A grand scene. Sterility of soil. Lake region. Hot springs. Volcanic eruptions. The causeway. Environs of Mexico. Lofty steeples. Arrived at the city of Mexico on the 26th Nov. Custom-house. Gran Sociadad and Holy Ghost street.

At eleven o'clock on the night of the 23d inst., the diligencia was waiting for its passengers, and on their arrival it was discovered that the two Mexicans had already secured the back seat. The gentleman who had the English lady in charge, politely requested one of the Mexicans to give up his place, so that he, her protector, could be seated by her, and assist in holding her children. But to my surprise, contrary to all usages of stage-coach travelling in the United States, and to every thing else that I have observed in the distinguished politeness of the Mexican people, they positively refused; and the lady, who could only ride on a back seat, was obliged to be positioned between the two interesting Mexicans; they refusing also to give up the sides to a lady with an infant in her arms. I have been informed, by gentlemen who have travelled in Europe, that such is the stubborn unkindness by which ladies are treated on that enlightened continent, and it has been with many feelings of shame that I have heard gentlemen, travelling in

steamboats and stage coaches in the Union, express themselves, that Americans pay too much attention to ladies; yet it has ever been my opinion, that if politeness should ever be extended from one human being to another, where a sacrifice of interest was to be made, without exception, the mothers of the human family should command that offering.

Having made our exit from the city of Vera Cruz through the northern gate, we were met by our escort, mounted on small pacing nags, with jingling spurs, rattling swords and carbines. Our direction lay, for the most part of the night, along the margin of the sea, the road being over the drifted sand, often blown up and re-modelled by the northers; and during our ride over it, we were much annoyed by the sand fly peculiar to that region, as also by the slow rate the team of eight animals drew the sinking wheels of the diligencia over the ponderous road. During the night the air was filled with a species of large beetle, by name *Cocúyos.* These displayed wandering or floating fires, caused by intense phosphoric light, emitted from their bodies, said to be strong enough to enable a person to read by; and I was reminded of the unparalleled victory which, in that region of country, Cortes, with but two hundred of his followers, obtained over nearly one thousand of his fellow countrymen, under the command of Narvez; the enemy mistaking the lights of the insect for so many matchlocks of their assailants. Our track from Vera Cruz to the city of Mexico, was the same, or nearly so, which the immortal Cortes and his brave companions travelled in the early conquest of the country, leaving desolation and slaughtered thousands to cover his footprints; and my mind was often filled with the many wonderful exploits performed by a few hundred of the most chivalrous spirits known in the early period of the sixteenth century.

My journey, for the most part of the first day, was over scorched plains, having the temperature of the equi-

noctial regions. This hot country, belting the whole coast of the Gulf of Mexico, extends into the interior, a distance of about fifty miles, and is denominated the *tierra caliente.* Notwithstanding we had to delve our way over parched sands, yet there was often to be seen the deep black mould of fertile soil, on which was inconceivable luxuriancy of growth of many varieties of lovely aspect, and of aromatic wild flowers, and shrubbery, mingled and matted with the larger and smaller species of the umbrageous musquite growths, so impenetrable, through its multifarious thickness, to the view of man. Although the romantic beauties of this region were so pleasing to the eye, yet from the suffocating oppression produced from the sultry and relaxing heat of the tierra caliente, I was extremely impatient to ascend a higher temperature, more agreeable to my feelings; and also to be transported to an element beyond the reach of *malaria vomito.*

It was not until after day light that I had my reflections called home, by the sudden halt of the diligencia at a *Rancho,* a collection of farm-huts; and before I had time to think what was to be done, one of the soldiers of our guard had rode close to the side of the diligencia, and informed the passengers that, there we were to have a new escort, adding also in the most polite manner, that he and his companions were about to leave us to our destinies; all this was said with a most quizzical leer of his shining black eye at his military cap, which he had extended to the window of the carriage. The hint was too impressive to be resisted, and after every passenger had fingered his small change, and heard its parting jingle in the soldier's helmet, the hero of the night took his accomplished leave.

An escort of Mexican soldiers, who are about to be relieved, are very particular in imparting the fact to travellers, and one of them will always linger with his extended hat in his hand, to receive any donations which may be thrown into it; when this is performed, he takes his affec-

tionate adieu, and wishes the passengers a pleasant journey. Such *duns* proved to be troublesome, from the frequent change of escort; which, in some cases, would not have merrily trotted after us more than two or three miles, before we would have to take leave of the corporal and his command, by each of us handing over our twenty-five cents. And I would therefore advise the Minister of War to consult with the Minister of Finance, as to more *ad captandum ways and means* of filching the "rhino" from the pockets of defenceless men, women and children, who may be so unfortunate as to travel in the great republic of Mexico. Of little service does this guard often prove to be, to those depending on them; for, as I was told, at the first sight of the bristled ladrones, the brave soldiers clap their spurs to the sides of their steeds, and make safe their retreat. However, as in Mexico, great show does much good, and thereby as much delights the Dictator, I could not but be reminded of the heroic proposition made by the commander of the Chinese forces to the British general, to fight their battles with blank cartridges, as the Emperor would be just as much pleased with the reports of the guns, as if they had real lead bullets in them.

But to return from the digression. Having descended from the diligencia at the Rancho, where our first change of animals was made, I expressed my surprise when I discovered that the road I had travelled was broad, and paved with round stone, precisely as the principal streets are in towns and cities in the United States. The road, which looked to me like a well-improved street, had, to prevent the washing of the pavement by the rains, on the outer side of its broad curbing, capacious conductors, formed of cement, in which article, from some cause I did not ascertain, the Mexicans seem to excel all other nations: or else, those sluices were strongly paved, and not unfrequently, at long and steep hills, they have been hewn out of solid rock, and laid in their places with admirable masonic precision.

It was with much agreeable disappointment I was informed, that the road had, for a distance of three hundred miles and upwards, been finished by the old Spaniards, precisely in the same fashion; but it had been suffered in many places to go to decay by the Mexicans, from a want of energy, having exhausted all of their resources in revolutions, and the making of Presidents, Emperors, and Dictators—*men so great*—that upon the broad expanse of this whole earth, the like have never been seen; while, at the same time, the good people have been vastly imposed on and benighted in their downward condition. The numerous bridges, spanning ravines and water courses, all of arched masonry, are equal to any of the kind that I have seen or read of, and their antiquity has proved their durability. This road has, for its protection against the invasions of foreign foes, and especially the buccaneers of former times, castles erected on the most commanding eminences and passes, such as La Puente del Ray, Perote, &c.

The diligencia arrived at La Puente del Ray, now called the *Peoples' Bridge*, in time for breakfast, and at that place I took my meal, for the first time in a country public house of entertainment in Mexico, and more miserable food I never partook of. Nine persons sat down in low chairs to a high and ponderous old table, on a dirt floor, which had spread on it an earthen bowl of half-done black beans, called Frijoles, and a like shaped bowl containing stewed chicken, similarly cooked. To complete the repast, we had sweetened bread to chime with the other delicious varieties.

Although for an Englishman half-raw beef is requisite, I never yet found the human being who could eat half-done fowl. The old Belgian doctor, who constituted one of our party, declared that he had been so badly fed in some parts of Mexico upon half-cooked chickens, that he had, in self defence, been obliged to live on little *monkeys*.

Although the scenery of La Puente del Ray was truly romantic and sublime, by our being positioned in a deep

gorge between two mountains, or high hills, which abruptly rose upon both hands, the green moss-covered rocks of whose precipitous sides hung in festoons of wild vines and flowers, in all the luxuriance of a tropical climate, the summit of the one being crowned by a frowning old deserted castle, and both having at the same time a thickly matted, shaggy mane of musquite and other forest growths, upon their heights, while a rapid crystal stream washed the feet of each, making its exit from under the spanned arches of La Puente del Ray; yet with an unsatisfied appetite, to my view, it possessed a dark and loathsome appearance.

Near to the Cascasa Diligencia, the illustrious Santa Anna was finishing a new building, which would cost, as I was informed, fifty thousand dollars. It might have been in consequence of the bad fare I had received at the place, but I was of the opinion, that I would not have consented to reside in the Dictator's palace, if, for so doing, I should receive the property from him as a donation, and I rejoiced when the diligencia was ready to depart from it.

My first day's ride into the interior of Mexico, was not only interesting, but a new scene of existence to me. For as the morning's sun had cast his illuminating rays over the wild native scenery through which I was travelling, and I could at times behold, both far and near, a view spread out before me, differing from any thing before seen, which my fondest anticipations had imagined of its singular beauty. I had in fact ascended to the second eminence, or table land, called the *tierra templada*, or temperate region.

Although the landscape, to my view, had changed by being removed from the gay sultry region of many blossoming flowers, that borders upon the sea; the temperate zone abounded in a more stately growth of forest, for with the varieties of the musquite, and the liquid amber tree, I now beheld the tall and majestic cypress; and as the diligencia would now and then wind down some craggy steep, into a deep glen, where my ears would be stunned by the wild

screams of the parrots, and all the other beautifully plumed feathered tribes; it was only necessary to ascend the opposite height, to be transported again into the tierra templada, there to perceive the forest, a perfect medley, from its being indiscriminately mixed, and the whole woods so thickly matted and entwined, being apparently impervious to the footsteps of animals, with a scrubby, bushy growth of deepest green colour, which unconsciously makes the eye delight to dwell upon it.

It should not now be neglected to remark, that much to my enjoyment I discovered the Orizava was not a portion of the range of mountains as before described, which holds the Gulf of Mexico to its place, as it appeared to be when first seen by me from the sea. But on the contrary, its towering height, as seen above all other eminences, deceived me by its distance, and I now discovered that the Orizava was far into the interior, and that I should have the privilege of looking up to it at any moment, while travelling the burning plains beneath; and whilst the sun was shining on me with intense heat, I could find some relief from my sufferings by simply casting my eyes up to the region of perpetual winter, and as I looked upon the height, it seemed to be a crystal hemisphere, against which the rays of light appeared to delight in spangled splendour, to sport time away; while, at the same moment, the many coloured clouds beneath appeared to struggle and roll in solemn grandeur, to acquire their native supremacy, and thus crown the monarch of mountains.

As I progressed on my way, it was plainly perceptible that the whole region of country was volcanic, and that the hills and mountains did not the more exhibit this appearance than the vales and plains; for not a rock, at any time, was to be seen, which did not show that its formation was by fire. All visible, was lava, and indeed, I travelled over a valley, every foot of which was covered with it, having been shot up in spherical forms, and yet there was no moun-

tain near, of conical formation, from whence the lava could have been heaved into the valley by volcanic eruption.

My first day's journey from the city of Vera Cruz was to Jalapa, a distance of about ninety miles, over a road disagreeable to travel on, in consequence of the continued journey, and the thundering noise of the heavy diligencia on the pavement. And be it remembered, by way of giving an idea of the wealth of the Dictator of the Republic of Mexico, that all of the lands over which I had that day travelled, as I was informed, were exclusively the property of Santa Anna.

Jalapa is said to be the most beautiful and agreeable town in Mexico, and a place of retreat from the vomito, by the inhabitants of the tierra caliente. Perpetual spring has her reign there, and vegetation, therefore, is ever verdant and blooming. It is from that town that the medicine, to be found at the apothecaries, has derived its name. I was told that, for a long period after the conquest, this vegetable medicine was brought into market by the Indians, from the mountains, where the snakes were so abundant and dangerous, that the white man never had the temerity to adventure for it.

The town is built upon the steep declivity of a hill. In the Plaza, as it is called, or the market square, I, for the first time, beheld the Mexicans retailing their fruits, vegetables, bread-stuffs, and meats to the citizens, and a filthy operation it was. Their marketing was heaped upon mats, or cotton cloths spread upon the pavement of the place, which was resorted to by both man and beast. It was here I left the old Belgian doctor, again to take his chances for little monkeys or half-cooked chicken, not though, without having first learned from him many interesting things of the people amongst whom I had to travel.

That which I chiefly delighted in, while at Jalapa, was the pleasing sight of the ladies, whose beauty seemed to partake of the eternal blossoming of their native region;

for smiling loveliness appeared to have partially delighted to dwell upon their symmetrically angelic countenances, and while they could often be seen peering from behind the grated windows adorned with flowers,—yet no blossom was half so lovely, as the sweet rose that bloomed under the soft delicate brunette hue of their cheeks.

At 10 o'clock, on the following morning after my arrival at Jalapa, I again took my departure in the diligencia, that day, to commence my ascent to the plain of Perote. I was then about to leave a region of perpetual humidity, and eternally green verdure; for in the economy of nature, an all beneficent Providence has ordered, that, as the rains do not descend in that country for nine months in the year, the earth may be irrigated by humid vapours taken up from the sea, and descending on the lands, appearing like clouds, as they slowly and gently skimmed over, kissing as it were, with liquid lips, the fields and spontaneous growth; and by which means the germing vegetation, absorbing the vapours, receives a sufficient nourishment to mature perfection.

I had frequently observed, as I journeyed forward, houses built upon the road-side of reeds and sticks, set up endways, and thatched with rank grass or palm leaves—huts that indeed must have been very airy; for between every reed and stick, interstices had been left for the free circulation of the atmosphere through the habitation.

I observed also, at greater distances from the road, a number of mounds thrown up as it were to the height of from ten to twenty feet, of conical form. These hillocks seemed to have been irregularly, and without design, cast up like so many ant-hills, and I at first imagined them to be Indian mounds or sepulchres, for the slain of some battle-field, or monuments of the aborigines of the country. I was surprised to find that these were likewise dwelling-places, and filled with inhabitants; being dirt-houses, which had been thrown up to prevent the intolerable heat of the sun from penetrating through them.

If I should be asked who or what are the population to be met with upon the highways, I would answer that, to me, they seemed to be but the original Totonacs and Compoalbans who were in possession of that part of the country when Cortes discovered it; for the complexion and outward appearance of the larger number of people that I met with, were of the tawny and Indian caste, and, from their meek and spiritless appearance, a stranger would little suppose that murder and rapine were the predominant traits of their character; and if any should be incredulous of the fact, it will only be necessary for them to travel once the thoroughfare from the city of Mexico to Vera Cruz, to behold upon either hand the sad and many emblems of the crucifix over fallen travellers. And I do verily believe that there is not a mile of that melancholy road, that has not flowed with the blood of plundered and murdered individuals.

After ascending a high hill which, in fact, grew into a mountain, about nine miles from Jalapa, to the left hand, was a vault, which had an old Spaniard deposited in it, in a standing position, looking through a window down upon the road, and I had no doubt but that as the old fellow had been the terror of the highway when living, and the feeling predominant in death caused him thus to dispose of his mortal remains, that his ghastly aspect might, in grim death, frighten travellers. This, perhaps, was the same spirit that induced a celebrated horse-racer of my own State, who, when dying, directed that his body should be buried upright, under the judges' stand of a race-track, with his face towards the coming-out place.

But as I was going also to remark—to the right hand I beheld a scene of the most picturesque sublimity of any other that had come under my view; and the reader must not consider my raptures extravagant, in my admiration of the face of nature, in this country, for pen cannot describe the excess of romantic beauty it affords, when seen in a volcanic region, under a tropical sun, and as he approaches each

object in regular succession, every thing in its turn will appear the most grand—the most wonderful.

Whilst ascending the road which lay on the side of a mountain, on turning my attention to the right hand, I looked over an extensive valley, spotted with farms, and having a village in its centre, sending up high above its walls its many spires, pointing to the heavens. As I raised my eyes above the plain, a lofty cataract met my view, apparently gushing in one large and solid body of water about midway from the far distant opposite mountain; and near to the fall of water, was another village just above it, situated on a slip of table land, stretching along the side of the high mountain. To realize the grandeur of the view, would oblige any one to see it for himself. I solicit the reader to picture to his mind two lovely villages, in sight at the same time—one in the plain beneath him, the other sitting like the Queen of cities on the slope of a towering height; while the silvery tide of a pure, foaming and bounding stream waters the valley beneath. At the same time, the tolling of the bells, from the many cupolas of the villa in the valley, came sweetly echoed back by those of the village on the mountain in the distance, in tones just heard—like the scarcely audible melodious strains of the Æolian harp, to charm the weary to sleep, and the sleeping to dreams of Elysium, and the traveller from the bosom of his family and home.

My journey to the Pueblo, a village and castle of Perote, was unaccompanied by an incident worthy of remark, since on that day I was fortunate enough to escape meeting with the *Volontier Gard*, a band of ladrones, who had given themselves that distinguished appellation. Yet the view of the country, whenever I chose to look abroad for recreation or information, was always instructive and full of interest. I was then about to enter the *tierra fria*, or the cold region, the last great natural elevation that would place me on the summit of the Andes, and in the midst of the Cordilleras, as

they spread out over the table land of Mexico, as the Andes pass the Isthmus of Darien. The general elevation of the table land of Mexico is estimated at about six thousand feet above the level of the sea, but gradually declines towards the northern departments.

The plain of Perote is said to have been, in the time of the Aztecs, covered with a forest of heavy growth; but, to my view, it possessed not a single tree, or spontaneous shrub. All appeared to be a cold, dry, barren waste, in the midst of which, at an elevation of between seven and eight thousand feet above the level of the sea, sat the dark and dreary-looking castle of Perote; whilst, at the same time, at a considerable distance, although it appears to be near at hand, is the Corfre de Perote, with a large square rock of box-form crowning its summit, from which the mountain takes its name. The rock, to me, looked as if it had been placed there to stop a hole beneath; which, perhaps, if the Mexicans were to remove, as a wag once observed, they could have a flame of fire spouting upwards, sufficient to afford candle-light for every family in the whole country.

Corfre de Perote is said to be at an elevation of about twelve thousand feet above the sea, and here, although it is not sufficiently cold to induce the natives to have chimneys to their houses, or fires otherwise, the skin of either man or beast is never suffused with moisture, or a genial glow of warmth—the whole surface having a perpetually dry and most indescribably uncomfortable sensation, which produces a despondency and loathsomeness of feeling, perhaps more sensibly felt at Perote than at any other district of Mexico.

I did not reach the Puebla of Perote until after 7 o'clock, P. M., notwithstanding my anxious solicitude to arrive there sooner. I felt desirous of seeing the Texians who were confined in the fortress, and more especially, Mr. Joseph E. Cruse, a young gentleman who had been raised to the mercantile business at Lynchburg, Va., my own home. But the diligencia arrived too late for the castle to be visited. I

had much sympathy for Mr. C., for he was one of the San Antonio prisoners who was not taken in arms, and had visited Texas to recover his health; and hard was his fate, to have, shortly after my visit, paid the debt of nature, in so cheerless a place as Perote. Grievous must it have been to his aged parent thus to part with a son, in the sunshine of youth.

At Perote my fare was but little better than the breakfast I sat down to on the first day of my travel, and I hailed with delight the summons at midnight for the departure of the diligencia. As day dawned, the objects that met my view were the Ranchos, the miserable open huts inhabited by Indians, the indolent and the poor; and heaven knows how they obtain a living—certainly I do not. As I journeyed onward, it was not without beholding the extended mode of cultivating and grazing the land; and first the *Haciénda*, a farm of vast extent, covered with green verdure, having multitudes of stock feeding upon it, and attended by herdsmen and shepherds, which would forcibly recall to the mind of any individual the days of the Latins so poetically described by Virgil in his Georgics.

Generally, of near proximity to the hacienda, would be a Pueblo, built of sun-burnt bricks, called a *dobis*, and having also its costly church of lofty towers. In consequence of the indisposition of one of the passengers at a Pueblo, we stopped at it; and I took occasion, for the first time, of entering a church in Mexico, and indeed the first time that I had ever beheld the interior of a completely furnished Roman Catholic house of worship. The first object which met my view was a badly clad lady, who no doubt needed the consolations of religion, for the expression of her countenance was the very picture of sorrow. She was surrounded by candles, although the high sun never burned with more brilliancy, and streamed its illuminating rays down through the great dome of the edifice; she was kneeling before a richly gilt, or golden altar, on which was a full

length likeness, in a highly ornamented frame, of her saint. My attention was soon diverted from her devout and solemn aspect, by hearing the heart-felt supplications of a beautiful little girl, who was bowed before, to me, an unknown saint. My eyes also caught the view of a wax figure, dressed in black, and with a flowing robe. That statue, I remarked to a passenger, of the Roman Catholic faith, was a good likeness of Thomas Jefferson; but he informed me that it was intended for Joseph, the husband of Mary. I replied to my good-natured friend, that I did not before know that black silk shorts and knee-buckles were worn in Joseph's time. Being again summoned to the diligencia, my thoughts for some time dwelt on the subject of religion.

As before remarked, my attention had been directed to the Haciéndas as I passed them. In one or more of the deeper valleys of Perote, I saw that the improved American ploughs were used for tillage; and a wealthy Mexican, a noble benefactor of his people, had at one time made a large importation of these ploughs, designing to introduce them generally among the farmers of his country. But one of the glorious revolutions of Mexico was coeval with the benificence of the good citizen, and his ploughs shared a scattered and ruinous fate, in the midst of resounding arms and the havocs of war. Thus the people lost in their destruction a more beneficial revolution in their agricultural system, than ever the sword has wrought for them in obtaining their independence, or in raising men to high stations. The plough universally in use in Mexico, is the instrument handed by the Romans to their posterity. The old Spaniards, and their descendants, prejudiced the minds of these people against the successful operation of that spirit called improvement; and in this respect the Yankee nation, by a liberal mindedness in "trying all things, and holding fast to that which is good," have advanced about two thousand years ahead of their neighbours, not only in agriculture, but in all the arts and sciences practised in the civilized world.

On the plain of Pueblo are said to be several hot springs, one of which I passed. It suddenly gushed from under the earth by the side of the road, in a bold stream, about three or four feet wide—and, as it rapidly glided away, I could but be reminded, in observing the vapour which ascended from it, of the many beneficial results of steam power. However, the Mexicans were not suffering the blessings of hot water to pass off unappreciated, and applied to some purpose, for I perceived a party of them near the fountain-head of the spring, making a pond for their horses to bathe in.

During the day's ride I arrived in view of what is said to be two perpetually snow-capped peaks, beside that of the Orizava, between which my journey would lay, on my road to the city of Mexico. The *Popocatepetl*, being interpreted from the Indian, means "the hill that smokes." It is estimated to be two thousand feet higher than Mont Blanc, in Europe. Its top is of conick form, and notwithstanding its immense height, from an inclination of its head towards the north, I could, as I passed, plainly perceive the funnelled cavity that opened from its summit. To my view this mountain was less mantled with that pure element snow than the Orizava.

From its appellation, the presumption would be, that smoke would be perpetually seen issuing from this volcano; but no emissions of flaring sparks, ashes, or smoke was beheld by me; all was still and tranquil; yet the evidences of its terrible combustion in former times, were discoverable from about one-half of its height being covered with lava, presenting a vast pile of dark matter, without having in a single instance a particle of vegetation to relieve the eye; still I was informed that a distant and dead sound was heard by those who approached the mountain. Mr. Prescott, in speaking of this volcanic mountain, beautifully remarks—"Soaring towards the skies, with its silver sheet of everlasting snow, it was seen far and wide over the broad plains of Mexico and Pueblo—the first object which the morning's

sun greeted in his rising—the last where his evening rays were seen to linger, shedding a glorious effulgence over its head, that contrasted strikingly with the ruinous waste of sand and lava immediately below, and the deep fringe of funeral pines that surrounded its base."

Under the heat of a tropical sun, and the appearances which all creation in Mexico presents, of devouring fire, evidently show that the time has been when Nature, in her strong convulsions, has exhibited the resplendent scene of a world on fire, and when the funeral pile in struggling throes was being extinguished, man, in the blindness of his reason and superstition, snatched a torch, and, in feeble imitation, attempted to perpetuate the eternal embers by planting it on the top of the high pyramid of Cholula, erected on the plain of Pueblo, in commemoration of an imaginary visit made to that country by their god Quetzalcoatl.

Diego Ordaz, at the head of nine Spaniards, is said to have the glory of being the first person who ever attempted to ascend the Popocatepetl. Its summit, however, since the days of the renowned Diego Ordaz, has been gained by others, and I was told of one individual who did not, for two years, recover from the sufferings he had to encounter in the enterprise: for, besides bleeding at the ears, and eyes, and nose, his lungs suffered much from the difficulty he experienced of respiration, which, for the space of time above mentioned, produced an oppression in the breast.

While my meditations were occupied in beholding the stupendous spectacle of the Popocatepetl, I had to turn my eyes in another direction, to look upon the Iztaccihuatl, which the Indians called the "White Woman." This mountain, clad in its white garment, and made brilliant and spangled by large flakes of ice, bleached by the cold blasts of centuries, was also denominated by the aborigines, the wife of its taller and more fiery neighbour. The elevation of Iztaccihuatl I have never seen noticed, nor could I ascertain from my inquiries that it had ever been taken.

The diligencia arrived, on the evening of the 26th inst., at the city (though contrary to the meaning of the name) of Pueblo. This place has also the distinguished appellation of *Puebla de los Anglos*, "the town of the angels," acquiring this heavenly cognomen from the belief of the natives, which no doubt was the working of an ingenious and wily priestcraft, to wit, the angels of heaven condescended to quit the throne of God, and descended to the town of Puebla, there to work in vile stone and mortar, in the erection of the truly large and costly cathedral of that place. It is certainly a great misfortune, resulting in the over-anxiousness or weak-mindedness of the clergy of any country, to thus impose upon the superstitious credulity of an ignorant people. As for myself, I had just as soon believe in the fabled legends of the Aztecs' sanguinary war god, as in the absurdities believed by the Mexicans of the town of the angels. I say that it is to be regretted that a religion, originally pure, should have been so wickedly and falsely perverted by those professing to be the heralds of Christ, as to impose on a willing people. The impossibilities of truth, are but in the disgust of the minds of the intelligent, to throw doubt and disbelief upon the whole fabricated institution, which results in atheism, or else, in after times, in the progress of man's enlightenment, to raise up enemies to the church, who will uproot and overthrow the whole system, and on its ruined foundation erect a plan of pristine pureness, upon the truth as it is. I do not think it my duty slurringly to garble the truth, but to speak it entire, in whatever I may have been impressed, of men and things, religion and politics.

I arrived in Pueblo in time to make a hasty visit to the Cathedral de los Anglos. It is erected of dressed stone, and its dimensions are large. Its interior is approached by a short flight of steps, covering the whole extent of the basement of the building, which gives to the whole an admirable proportion of height, for its length and breadth. As the visiter enters, he is overwhelmed by the number of saints

and angels that strike his view. Before the altar rise two columns to the ceiling, said to be of solid silver; but as the dusk of evening had set in, I was prevented from making a more enlarged examination, for the doors were to be fastened, to the exclusion of spectators and worshippers.

Pueblo de los Anglos is said to contain above one hundred thousand inhabitants. The diligencia took its departure from that celebrated town between two and three o'clock, the following morning.

Having stopped at daybreak at a small town, or Pueblo, for a change of animals, myself and fellow travellers ran into a *Meson*, or Mexican tavern, where we obtained a cup of chocolate, which had been boiled and frothed by the hands of a beautiful Mexican girl; which being consumed, Brother Jonathan, (for such was the appellation given to the Pennsylvania stage driver, by all foreigners who travelled the road,) was to take us that day to the end of our journey. We had not proceeded far before we came in broad view of the dead man and his wife's mountain, on our right hand, which exhibited the most singular phenomena of two human beings, in perfect profile likeness, on its summit, in extended postures, reminding me of my boyish days, when, with my compeers, we would leave our compressed figures upon banks of snow.

In passing the ranges of the Popocatepetl and the Iztaccihuatl, I was pleased to see that the mountain was covered with a grove of timber of good size, for I there saw oaks and pines of the same dimensions that I had beheld in old Virginia; the colder regions being better adapted to the growing of forest trees than the warmer climates. And it should ever be remembered by the reader that, whatever else the traveller may behold, he is nevertheless never out of sight of the crosses of melancholy bearing, being monuments erected over the bones of murdered human beings, and thus consecrated.

My progress over this mountain, although cold, was inter-

esting, from the many crowds of *Arrieros*, with their *cargoes* on packed mules, a large party of whom were loaded with the specie of the second indemnity from the Mexican to the United States government. As the climax of the mountain had now been gained, and we had turned on the descent, the scene was also changed, for the far-famed valley of Mexico was then, like a map, spread out before our view; and indeed it was a lovely and magnificent sight to behold, although the sublimity of the scene did not realize the expectations of my excited imagination, from the rapturous descriptions I had received of it from other travellers.

The day was favourable—for the clear, blue vault of heaven was without a dark spot to dim the exceeding and peculiar serenity of the skies of that elevated and rarefied region, the atmosphere of which was so light and thin, aided by the brilliant gleaming of the sun, that the eye could overcome space, and comprehend distant objects, with a beauty surprising to one raised in a more dense and a lower climate. Hence it is, I have no doubt, that that plain has borrowed half its charms.

Yet to the minds of the conquerors to whom America was a new world, and when the valley of Mexico was in a state of nature, not as now, mainly presenting a parched and barren waste, but under the dominion and care of the Aztecs, the forest of ages towering high in the air, and casting up its umbrageous branches, relieved and freshened a scene the loveliness of which perhaps might have been unrivalled; for nature, like the beauty of a woman, is more admirable when beheld in its native simplicity; and it can easily therefore be accounted for, why the early Spaniards looked upon the valley of Tenochtitlan, so called by the Indians, as the promised land—the Elysium upon earth.

I here quote the scientific outlines of the geography of the Mexican Valley, by Mr. Prescott, as they could not have come under the immediate knowledge of a traveller.

AMERICAN INDEMNITY ON ITS WAY TO VERA CRUZ.

"Midway across the continent, somewhat nearer the Pacific than the Atlantic ocean, at an elevation of nearly seven thousand five hundred feet, is the celebrated valley of Mexico. It is of an oval form, about sixty-seven leagues in circumference, and is encompassed by a towering rampart of porphyritic rocks, which nature seems to have provided, though ineffectually, to protect it from invasion." He also remarks that "five lakes are spread over the valley, occupying one-tenth of its surface." Thus, as it were, at one view, bursts upon the astonished traveller, village, city, lakes, plains, and mountains, together with a view of the culture, and the different kinds of crops, as husbanded by the Mexicans, to interest the beholder, as he journeys along.

I could only admire the extensive fields spread out before me, for the valley of Mexico is justly renowned for its fertility; all the lands are said to be capable of cultivation by irrigation, from the abundance of water afforded from streams and lakes. Thus, whilst I might, upon the right hand, be pained to see the sterileness of a tract of country, made so, perhaps, by the neglect of its opulent owner, and appropriated as a common for grazing; on the left I would be greeted by the pleasing prospect of miles in extent, and as far as the eye could reach, of lands cultivated alone in maize, or Indian corn. And while now I would arrive at verdant nooks, with acres of land cultivated in *chili*, or Indian pepper, of which the inhabitants make considerable use—and I was informed that a single individual, from one crop of chili alone, realized the immense sum of fifty thousand dollars—and then I would come upon the green and flowery fields, cultivated to feed the cochineal insect. But what the more attracted my attention was the deep green, wide-spreading aloe, called by the Mexicans *Maguey*. This plant has, in its perfection, a stem shooting up to ten or fifteen feet in height, with an appearance of clustered flowers at its top when ripe—the stem, or stalk of a liquid pithy substance, is consumed in a raw state by the

natives. But such being the variety of the uses to which this spontaneous plant is appropriated by the Mexicans, I shall speak of its multifarious properties and consumption, when my longer travels and residence in the country will better enable me to describe them.

The view of the valley of Mexico is certainly beautiful and grand, and but for the painful absence of timber, and the vast sterility of much of its territory, might, perhaps, be the most magnificent sight any where to behold upon the face of the globe. There is no country in the world, from the best information I could obtain, where individual citizens hold as large bodies of land as in Mexico, and it is estimated that, from seven millions of inhabitants, in all probability, less than five hundred thousand are the owners of all the *terra firma* of that rich country.

As I progressed, I was soon brought in bold view, by my close contact, with the lake region. One of these lakes near the city of Mexico, I was informed, was thirty miles in length, and looked to be the bay or port of the great city. Although the lake is said to be of that considerable extent, yet, as my eyes, in that atmosphere, were cast over its transparent blue waters, and the dark reflections of the mountains were thrown upon it, the space did not seem to me to be one-half, or more than one-third the distance. This lake by name is Tezcuco—has an abundance of fish, and during the most of the year is inhabited by large flocks of water-fowls—and it was on that lake that Mr. Wilcox, the American consul, was in the habit of amusing himself by firing small shot from a cannon upon the ducks.

There is on the border of the lake, *Agua calienta*, or hot springs, the waters of which are used for bathing purposes. During the nine months of the dry season, when the lakes recede from their high water marks, all the shores that have been covered by water, as was the case when seen by me, had a thick incrustation, or deposit of carbonate of soda, which is scraped up by the Indians, and sold by them for

the purpose of making soap—as the inhabitants are compelled to use that article; for not a sufficiency of wood is burned in Mexico to produce a supply of ashes for the manufacture of soap.

All of the water, as likewise the soil of Mexico, is strongly impregnated with carbonate of soda, as I had continual opportunities of witnessing. The lake water exhibited the phenomenon in a more perceptible manner than the flowing streams, and some of them were stronger than others, by the difference of the quantity of their deposits. I once rode on the margin of a small lake, where the hoofs of my animal as it passed over the deposit of carbonate of soda, made sounds resembling that of snow when trod upon. It might be inquired—from whence does the water of the lakes obtain the mineral? for but few of them have streams from the mountains running into them, being but stagnant pools of rain water. The reply is obvious—the water extracts its soda constituent from the earth, which seems to have an inexhaustible amount of that most ostensible component of its parts. This one thing, however, I was unwillingly made satisfied of—the water of Mexico has an active medical effect, as all foreigners who go to that country can testify, from the fact of its deleterious effects having carried many to the tomb, by conferring a chronic diarrhœa on those who partake freely of its use. The water of the city of Mexico is said to be more pernicious to the health of a stranger than any other in all the Republic. The entire use of rain water, I was informed, proved always to be a specific remedy for the afflicted.

But what, as much as any thing else, attracted my attention, was a mound which had been thrown up by a volcanic eruption, immediately on the margin of the lake. This mound of lava seemed to me to have been about two hundred feet in diameter at its base, and one hundred in height. Its form was precisely like that of a funnel, with its greater diameter resting on the surface, while at the same time there

was a flue or vent through which the volcanic fire exhausted itself.

As the diligencia entered on the great causeway which separates lake Chalco from Xochicalo, a passenger, familiar with the country and its history, informed me that this bridge was not only made by the Aztecs, but was the same identical track which Cortes and his followers passed on the 8th November, 1519, the day on which they first set foot in the city of Mexico.

As I advanced over the diversified and beautifully picturesque environs of the Capital, I could behold before me a large and compact city, which had for its first and most striking features, white walls and lofty steeples; and, I dare say, for the number, the magnitude and height, the religious buildings of the present day are not unlike what they were in the day when the conqueror first beheld them, the towering temples of the gods of Anahuac. Thus, on the evening of the 26th of November, unharmed by ladrones, or any other casualty, in a fatigued condition, and covered with dust, I arrived in the city of Mexico—too late, however, to behold any of the beauties of the place I had entered.

My first care, after the custom-house officers had examined my baggage—for in Mexico there are revenue officers in every town in the interior—was to take up my lodgings in the *Gran Sociadad*, a French Hotel, in Holy Ghost street.

CHAPTER V.

The Overthrow of Cortes. City of Mexico. Receding of the Lake. View of Holy Ghost street. A large Church. A Mexican Lady. Gen. Thompson's residence. An elegant part of the town. The streets of Mexico. Earthquakes. Style of Architecture. The city of Mexico. The proportion of a Spanish house. The population of the city of Mexico. Gen. Thompson's hospitality. Baron La Rook. The Plaza. The Palace. The Cathedral. Remarkable Carriages. Basalt Stone. Interior of the Cathedral. Mister Officer an American artist. Virgin of Remedios. Tomb of Iturbide. Rarefied air The Convent of San Francisco. The Government Palace, Mint, &c. A general officer at the reception door. Capt. Cortes, of the Grenadiers. National Monument. Iturbide's Palace. Santa Anna Theatre. Numerous Beggars. Journeymen Beggars. Feats of strength. Dress of the Lazarinos.

After the overthrow of Cortes, upon that memorable occasion of the *noche triste*, the melancholy night when it is said that he lost more than four hundred of his followers, and all of his artillery, which was overturned from the causeways into the lakes and dykes—and having made his retreat from the city, but to rally and reinforce his army, which being done, he speedily returned, to complete a conquest which had hardly commenced, and having with a force much more numerous and better provided, retraced his steps to Tacaba, he made that place his head-quarters. The future and renowned Conqueror having ascended a high temple of Tacaba, was observed resting his cheek upon his elbow, in a most pensive and melancholy mood, and while thus absorbed in the deep meditations of the moment, during which a tear had trickled down his cheek, an officer who had observed him, ventured in his sympathy to touch the shoulder of his general, and in cheering tones bade his commander to hope for victory and for conquest.

The mind of Cortes at the time, like that of his Master when overlooking Jerusalem, whose standard of the Cross he chiefly delighted to plant in the pathway of his victories, was filled with love and admiration for the city of Mexico, which caused him to exclaim that "it was the most

beautiful thing on earth," and in the deep sorrow of his heart he lamented that soon, by his hand, the place that teemed with countless multitudes of inhabitants, must perish by famine and the sword; and that the towers, the temples, and the palaces, that glittered so resplendently in the sun, must soon be demolished, and buried beneath the floods of the canals and lakes—for they would not give up their idols, and peaceably surrender to the standard of Castile. And thus, like the Son of Jehovah, he would have exclaimed, "Oh Jerusalem! Jerusalem, how often would I have gathered thee as the hen doth her brood, under her wings, but ye would not." To the mind of Cortes, with, as it were, the most beautiful fancy sketch of nature's pencil thrown wide to his view, with a fair city in the midst, it might have at that day seemed to be the most lovely sight on earth; and I have no doubt that the city of Mexico, as it then appeared, was peculiarly adapted to exhibit to the view and fancies of human beings, more loveliness, and charms of art and nature blended, than the boasted appearance of the city as it now is—for the simple reason that in the Aztic city there was variety—while to the contrary, the Spanish cannot be possessed of any.

The four great causeways of the Aztics, that stretched through the lakes, like so many bridges over seas, and intersecting the centre of the city; the many high temples, and lofty white towers; the imperial and the nobles' palaces, covering acres of land; the floating gardens; the groves; the canals, filled with light canoes, rapidly passing and repassing; while the grand whole was crowded with minor and inferior buildings;—nothing of all which are to be seen now—but upon the demolished ruins and fallen rubbish of departed magnificence, has been erected the modern, although the oldest city on the American continent, by Spanish architects and Spanish conquerors.

The city is of square form, and, although not upon an elevation, is yet built upon a level dry plain, which has result-

ed, first, from the fact, that the old city was used mainly in filling up the canals; and, lastly, that the great lake of Tezcuco has receded between one and two miles from the walls of the city, which cause is attributed to the more rapid evaporation of the water from the lakes, since the plain of Mexico has been totally divested of its forests, so that it might the more resemble the plains of Castile, and remind the Spaniard of his European home. The streets of Mexico run north and south, east and west, intersecting one another, so that the squares are of an exactness, and equally of the same dimensions.

On the following morning, after my arrival in the city of Mexico, I rose from my bed refreshed, from having had a good night's sleep, notwithstanding the eternal ringing of bells; and no one can believe that the music of those ding-dong instruments was the lullaby that soothed me into the arms of Somnus; but my confinement and fatigue in the diligencia, the last four days and nights, had welcomed the blessings of sleep to my heavy eyelids. Having thus enjoyed one continued and uninterrupted night's repose, I left my couch, animated with the prospect of beholding the finest city in the world, as I always had heard the city of Mexico to be; and so glowingly had the descriptions of the metropolis been given by others, that I almost hesitate to give mine own respecting it;—however, I shall attempt, in my own way, to give some detail of this proud and famed place.

So impatient had I become of seeing what was to be seen, and knowing whatever was to be learned, that I had not more than finished dressing than I threw open my window and thrust out my head, to catch an astonishing glimpse, or else I should not have had an appetite for breakfast; and, in fact, I could not, at the moment, but be reminded of the eagerness of animated boyhood, whose anxiety has been roused to such a tip-toe height, when about to visit a show,

that he cannot prevent himself from taking a peep under the canvass before entering the door-way.

And what did I behold?—I first cast my eyes through a range of buildings, far to the south; and the street seemed there to have been met by a high and grand barrier of a mountain, the beauty of which was heightened, inconceivably, by the distant view of the long avenue through which it was seen. As the golden beams of the morning sun were shed over it, it seemed to gleam with refulgence in its airy elevation. I then commenced slowly to retrace my view; and, as my eyes wandered from side to side, and from house to house, the street seemed to be filled with a motley crowd of gentlemen, and priests muffled in their cloaks and gowns; ladies, with their *rebosees*, a shawl drawn closely over their heads and faces, and crossed on their breasts, all slowly and solemnly walking along, as if they were going to or returning from a funeral; and I really should have been depressed by serious thoughts, if the scene had not been interrupted, here and there, by little mouse-coloured donkeys, loaded with charcoal, and driven by Indians, harshly screaming aloud, *Caobona! Caobona!*—and there was the water-carrier, loaded down with the weight of his earthen vessels, swung from his head, hanging before his breast and on his back; and, dearly, thought I, did he earn his living. While the greater number of the people, the paupers, standing in groups, or seated on the way-side, had drawn my gaze, my attention was suddenly startled by the clang of trumpets and the beating of drums, sounding a retreat from some outpost, where they had been doing duty all the previous night, and were now returning to head-quarters. The houses were all closely built together, without a single vacant lot, or intervening space between them;—all presented one massive front of ponderous construction, of about three stories in height—never higher—but a story in Mexico is twenty-five, or, at least, twenty feet, but never less than fifteen.

There was, on a moderate calculation, a large, high

church, whose cupolas were well and numerously supplied with different sized noisy bells, for about every other square. The roofs of the houses were all terraced, which contributed to add considerably to the flat, weighty appearance of the whole buildings; and, as my eyes, like the fools, spoken of—somewhere—had been wandering to the end of the world to the south, they had no sooner returned home than, truant like, they forthwith shot to the north; and, in like manner, as to the south, they were arrested by precisely the same panoramic view of mountain, churches, houses, donkeys and people; and in so perfect an exactness, that the mountain seemed but to have been the mirror by which the whole was reflected—and my faculty of seeing soon wandered back to me.

But I should not neglect to remark that, just before my vision returned entirely home, obliquely to the opposite from my window, they caught the glimpse of something attractive, which, upon a steady and minute inspection, proved to be, certainly, a beautiful Mexican lady; her dark hair; her light brunette complexion; and, above all,—for the light of heaven seemed to gather lustre from them—her soft and inexpressibly melting black eyes were playing havoc with my susceptible heart; and I do not know that the window would have contained me, if my Catholic friend had not warned me to leave it, as the Holy Ghost was passing along the street. I was thus reluctantly compelled to close the glass door, and go to breakfast.

My breakfast being over, my first care was to find Gen. Thompson's residence, and deliver to him my despatch from Judge Upsher, Secretary of State, U. S., and my commission for the usual *exequator* from the Mexican government; that having been soon accomplished, (for the residence of the American minister was near at hand,) and, after having been most kindly and politely received by Gen. Thompson, by whom I was invited to dine, I resolved to gratify the strong impulse of my feelings; that of beholding

the city of Mexico. The hotel of the Gran Sociadad fronts on Holy Ghost street; and that street having been the first which I had seen, and on which I had made my *debut*, and feeling desirous of viewing one of the more beautiful streets of Mexico, I of course did not return from the minister's residence to the high cognomened Holy Ghost street; not supposing that that street could have exhibited a specimen of the best improvement in the exalted city of Mexico, I therefore, naturally enough, hastened to search for a more elegant part of the town.

The broad and well paved streets of the city of Mexico, being perfectly straight, stretch out on a level plane; the only relief to the eye of the looker on being that, it matters not in whatever street you may happen to be, turn whatsoever direction you may, you will, through the long perspective, behold the mountains, which never failed to attract my attention from the heavy masonry of the buildings. There are no scattered houses here, but the entire squares are built up in one solid block, being, as it were, but one vast edifice, and having no back grounds; for every foot of earth is covered with stone and mortar; and, as the walls are all united, it is said that little detriment has ever been sustained there by earthquakes, which are always more or less felt in the spring season, saving the occasional cracking of walls, and the falling of some few houses on the suburbs, built of sun-dried brick. The dimensions of the houses of the city of Mexico surpass those of Vera Cruz and Puebla; yet the architecture is the same. I hardly know what to denominate the style, unless it should be the Arabic or Moorish, mixed with Indian. It is true, that some of the churches seem to be of the Gothic. This one thing, however, is certain;—I cannot remember to have seen, in any other city, or to have examined in books, similar species of architecture. I have, therefore, been forced to conclude that it is a style *unique*.

The city of Mexico, in its appearance, is more compact,

and, as a whole, in that respect, looks better than any other city that I have before seen; yet I must confess that I felt disappointed, from all that I had before heard, in not beholding a more magnificent outside show; for the coarsely stuccoed walls of the houses, with but few exceptions, having windows to their first story, looked to me as only being clumsy ramparts for the garrisons contained behind them; at the same time, the door-ways, in the centre, from twelve to fifteen feet in height, swung upon ponderous hinges, having many locks of curious construction, appeared to be the huge gates of a fortress. However, the Spaniard, from a spirit of distrust and jealousy, has never delighted in making a parade of all his valuables, to please idle spectators or a giddy multitude. You must enter within the *sanctum sanctorum*, to feast your eyes on his silver, his gold, his jewels, and the languishing eyes of his fair ones; whilst, at the same time, his ostentation consists in being wrapped in the ample folds of his broad cloth cloak, which, in Mexico, is the receipt for a gentleman;—a ride in his coach to the Paceo, or the splendid show of the costly trappings of the harness of his noble steed. It is within the gate of his palace, that you have an opportunity of beholding the extravagance of his expenditures. When you are fairly within the court of his castle, and you have cast your eyes upwards, you will then be struck with the view of the lofty columns and broad-spanned arches, that stretch around and support the corridors encompassing you on every hand. It is then within you perceive he considers to be the elegant portion of his house; and it is there that he lavishes all the ingenuity of his nature, in gilded gewgaws to please his fancy. I must say, that it did not please my taste, for the heavy architecture of the corridors, partaking of the outside appearance, oppressed the buoyancy of my spirits, if I could be said to have any, while the carving and the ornaments that I saw there, look too much, to me, like gaudy chains to please the maniac.

The population of the city of Mexico is estimated by some, to be two hundred thousand; but it is impossible to take a correct census (so it is said) of the city, or even of the country, on account of the considerable number of *lazarones* who inhabit the streets and nooks in the fields, having no homes. They do their cooking, their sleeping, and, indeed, all the functions of animal existence, in the streets. After I had become overpowered with fatigue, in my fruitless hunting for the most interesting parts of Mexico, I returned, at the hour of 4 o'clock, to the dwelling of General Thompson, chagrined at not having found a city which had surpassed all others before seen, or a street more attractive than that of the Holy Ghost.

At Gen. Thompson's I much enjoyed myself with his elegant hospitality. There I had the pleasure of being introduced to some of the ministers at the court of Mexico. Baron Le Roulk, minister plenipotentiary from Holland, I found to be a most interesting and pleasant man. He made many interrogations of me, as to the system of the United States government, and more particularly of my own state of Virginia. The baron often expressed his satisfaction with many of the features of constitutional points which I cited to him; but would as often exclaim, "Have the people self-government sufficient to carry out the great doctrines?" for he perceived that, with much difficulty, and by many revolutions, the Mexicans, professing to be republicans, were living under the will of a dictator. In reply, I endeavoured to explain the difference that existed between the two people, and finally hoped the agreeable baron a residence at the city of Washington, as minister from his country, where, from the proximity of the metropolis of the Union to the capital of my own state, he would then have an opportunity of verifying all that I had related.

It was not until after dark that I left Gen. Thompson, and therefore could not, until the following morning, make further investigations. My inquisitive curiosity had by no

means abated, for, added to my disappointment, my hope of yet being gratified in beholding something consistent with my expectations, urged me to an early rising; and, having first taken a look obliquely to the left, on the opposite side of the street, and then my breakfast, I sallied forth to behold, and not caring to be seen.

My direction was towards the Plaza, which, when I had arrived there, I discovered to be a vacant paved square of ground of about four acres. The government palace, the former residence of the viceroys, fronts this square on the east; on the south and west are buildings occupied as shops, having corridors extending over the side walks, resting on arches, supported by pillars. On the north is the cathedral, with its grounds covering the whole front of that side of the Plaza. There are one hundred and fifty places of religious worship in the city of Mexico, not exceeded, in capaciousness and richness, by any other city in the world.

The cathedral of Mexico is said to be the largest in America. This vast religious building has had a larger expenditure of money and labour than any other house in the city. Its site is upon a portion of the ground formerly occupied by the palace of Montezeuma, and the towering temple of the Aztics, erected for the worship of the Mexican war-god, which rose to the height of one hundred feet, and called the temple of Coatepantl. It may be that I am deficient in taste, as regards architectural proportions, but the front of the cathedral I could not altogether admire. It was without a basement sufficient to set off, in perfection, so stupendous and grand a building; for the want of this, some five or ten feet above the flat surface, much of the imposing sublimity of the cathedral is lost. The proportions of the cathedral are also much impaired by an extensive addition having been erected on the east side, to about one-half the height of the building; while on the west, there is no corresponding wing, which makes the view of the front, when taken as a whole, appear as if the west end

had been destroyed, or, otherwise, that the funds of the church were deficient for the purpose of completing the cathedral; and that, at some future day, it was designed to supply the vacuum.

The cathedral is, beyond doubt, the most attractive edifice in Mexico. The workmanship of the whole front is studied, and laborious, and I must confess that I have never witnessed so much expenditure in attempting a display of carvery by the chisel, the most singular figures that I ever beheld, which cover the whole front of this magnificent edifice. The remarkable carvings are not, to my knowledge, historical of any thing, and I could but look upon them as barbaric hieroglyphics put on to please the Indians. The pillars that ascend up against the wall, for the support of the two high cupolas of the cathedral are, in shape and resemblance, that of the harp, with a lion's foot at one end, and a serpent's head at the other; the name of the order I have never heard, if it has a cognomen.

The statues that stand in the niches are Saint Paul, Saint Peter, Saint James, &c. &c., not one of which are of marble. When we take into consideration the material of which this costly structure was erected, being of basalt, which is much more impervious to the edge of the chisel than Quincy granite, I could not but think of the consumption of time and toil which the pride of the followers of the meek and lowly Jesus inflicts on mankind, to show them on earth the gate to heaven. On the west end of the cathedral, about ten feet from the ground, is let into the wall, the calendar-stone, or "Montezeuma's watch," as denominated at the present day, and which has excited considerable speculation amongst antiquarians.

The interior of the cathedral of the city of Mexico is extravagantly splendid in all its apartments; the dome being supported by two immense basaltic columns of the Ionic order. The railing and banisters around the altar and galleries are of silver. Many of the candlesticks, some of

which are at least ten feet high, if not of rich gilt, are either of silver or gold. It is said that, besides many other images of precious metals, it contains a Virgin Mary of full sized statuary, of fine gold. It has also a railing around the high altar, the metal of which is composed of brass, silver and gold, mixed; for which, it is said, an English company offered a large sum of money, and to replace the railing in full weight in pure silver.

Mr. —— Officer, a young American artist, informed me that, having obtained permission to ascend the high altar, that he might examine a tablet of Murillas, of Lazarus at the rich man's gate; while there, a priest also ascended, having in his hand the Virgin of Remedius; and, on its being presented to him, he was of necessity obliged to kneel down and kiss it. While in this act, he not only discovered that the saint was without a nose, but the padre also; and, for that reason, it had been entrusted to his care. I am willing enough to believe that the padre will never have another nose to stick to his face; but as for the absurdities told by the priests, that they have used all the efficacious modes of applying glue and nails to fasten a new nose on their saint, but that all the ingenuity of the pious and the skill of the mechanic have been defied, for such is the obstinacy of the saint, that she would not have a new nose! As Mr. O. further stated, the dressing of the Virgin was covered with diamonds, it is said to be the most wealthy saint in Mexico, with the exception of one.

This cathedral is also the tomb of Iturbide, whose remains are deposited in a box, and positioned against the walls of the cathedral, having on it the inscription, "Sacred to the memory of Iturbide." The sweet tones of all the bells of the churches are said to be owing to the silver in their composition: and never in my life have I heard so musically sonorous a bell as that in the great tower of the Cathedral; yet I am disposed to think that this clearness of sound is attributable to the rarified air in which they are suspend-

ed, than to any silver they contain. One thing I know, however, that it was vexatious to be always obliged to be listening to the practising of them.

The convents of Saint Augustine and San Francisco, are the largest buildings that I have ever looked on, and they seemed to me, with their domes and many cupolas, to be cities in themselves. At the convent of San Francisco, I once attended divine worship, and heard a sermon preached in the English language, by an Irish priest. His services were for the benefit of foreigners who spoke English, and was listened to by about one hundred persons. I was informed, previous to my arrival in Mexico, that many of the houses had sunk some feet, resulting from the fact, that the city was built on marshy lake land; and I observed, that in consequence of the sinking of the convent of San Francisco, the side-walks on the western side had to be raised two feet to make it even with the pavement of the street.

The Government Palace is an extensive building, covering a whole square. Within its walls are appropriate apartments for a mint, a garrison for several regiments of soldiers, chambers for the Deputies of Mexico, and offices for the cabinet, besides having a large portion of the building apportioned for the chief magistrate of the country. The front of the palace, I was informed, measured about three hundred feet. It has a heavy prison-like aspect, being (as is almost invariably the case) stuccoed and whitewashed on the outside. It has no windows to the outer walls of the lower story; but to the upper one there is a regular row of windows with sashes and panes of glass, as are customary in the United States; which by no means is a general thing in Mexico, for the climate does not require it; and likewise persons could not be found who would trust themselves to such flimsy protection; and the stranger will find that, unless the house is inhabited by Europeans or Americans, the windows will only have the strong shutters. A large folding door or gateway opens in the front of the palace, just

in its centre. But there is an ornament, not on the outer wall of the building, but affixed to the gable end of the centre of the eastern side, which I should not neglect to mention; it is a golden or gilded sun, believed by some to be of pure gold.

A General stands at the door of the reception hall, officiating as porter; at the White House at Washington City an untitled Irishman and a coloured man, perform those menial offices. When the reception hall is entered, the visitor beholds at one end of the room, a throne canopied with crimson, where the Dictator sits in state over the destinies of the Mexican Republic. I had understood, previous to my visit to Mexico, that in the construction of the palace some marble of uncommon workmanship had been imported from Italy, for its adornment; but Captain Cortes of the Grenadiers, who politely offered his services to conduct me through the palace, assured me that there was not a foot of marble in the whole edifice.

In the centre of the large Plaza, in the front of the palace, the government was erecting a monument in commemoration of the national independence of Mexico, which was to be surmounted by the Goddess of Liberty. The Plaza is much resorted to by the people of the city, and was found to be very convenient by the combatants during the last revolution. Besides the cathedral and the churches generally, excepted, I found but two houses in the city, that impressed my view, as being different in some of their features from the general sameness that universally attended all others. The first was the ill-fated Iturbide palace, which still bears his name, having more of the elegancy of the Spanish style than any other that I had seen, and not having been stuccoed, the out wall was built of dressed stone, and but that the inelegant and unmeaning hieroglyphics were cut upon the stone, the palace would bear inspection in any city. The other alluded to, is that in which the office of the administration of coaches is kept.

Its outer walls are of mosaic work, with glazed blocks of different colours, resembling porcelain. The new unfinished theatre, which is to bear the name of the hero of an hundred victorious battles, Santa Anna, is to have an entire classical and modern front.

While promenading the streets of Mexico to glean something of its fame, the ringing of the bells was a constant annoyance to me, and it did seem that I should never become accustomed to them. To one not having been used to the continued sound of the church-going bells, it could not otherwise than be distressing. My way, too, was impeded in the streets by crowds going to and from mass, and absolution; and added to the reverberation of church and convent bells, was the explosion of rockets from those places of holy worship, as if it seemed that some church or convent was in the act of celebrating some feast every day. They have an expression in Mexico which was difficult for me to understand, which was—*gueriendo a dar*, wishing to ring. It appears that some short time previous to the general ringing, some one or more smaller bells would commence a tolling, or irregular ringing, until the time should arrive for the grand uproar of all the big ones.

Besides the numerous beggars to be found in every crowd, and under every saint, and at every corner of the street, I found likewise beggars stationed at every door of the churches, who are employed by the priests to ask alms of the passers by, for the benefit of each peculiar institution. This is an every day business, and from such an example by the church, the indolent are encouraged to make their living by asking charity. I have had journeymen beggars solicit me to give them money for the family of Joseph, Jesus, and the Most Holy Virgin. Their importunities are couched in the most impressive language, and which is perpetually at their tongue's end, "By the blood of Christ, and the agony of the cross, give for the benefit of the holy lady Guadelupé."

A person walking the streets of Mexico finds that he must frequently step aside to permit the water-carriers, and other day labourers of the class of lazarones, to pass and repass, or else come in contact with them, as from the inclined position of their heads, they cannot see before them. And I hope I may not be disbelieved, by those who have never witnessed the feats of strength of a lazarone man, carrying as much weight on his back and head as almost any of the mules of the country, at least their burthens to me seemed to be equal in bulk to the heaviest articles, transported by such animals. The dress of this class differs materially from that of the decent people. Their upper bodies are covered alone by a *serapi* or blanket, with a hole through the centre, for the head to pass through, or else it is worn as the North American Indians do their blankets; his pants are made of leather, and do not reach below the knee; he is without leggings of any kind, and his feet are shod with sandals.

CHAPTER VI.

Visit to the National Museum and University. Bronze statue. Sacrificial stone. Curiosities of savage antiquity. Gallery of paintings. Library room. Museum proper. Paintings. Portrait and armour of Cortes. Helmet of Alvarado. Giant of Jalapa. A miniature representation of two silver mines. Indian relics. Conchology. Mastodon. Santa Anna's portrait. Former grandeur of the City of Mexico. Montezeuma's Managerie and Aviary. Floating gardens. Visit to Conde Peniaske's private museum. Philosophic apparatus. Paintings. Chinese transparencies. Carved picture. Bomb shell. Maquey book. Crystallization. Beautiful lady. Feast day of Guadaloupe. Ringing of bells and firing of rockets and cannon. Going to mass. Flags. Picture of the Virgin of Guadaloupe. Procession. Joseph, the Infant, the Virgin Mary. The multitude embracing the Infant. Origin of the Virgin Guadaloupe. Pueblo of Guadaloupe. Village of mounds. Multitude of people at Guadaloupe. Commercial booths. Dealers of Monte. Gambling priests. Roman Catholics of the United States, Europe, and Mexico. Habits of the priests. Wealth of the Church of Mexico.

Having had my curiosity somewhat satisfied, in my cursory ramble over the city, I felt desirous of witnessing whatever might be considered scientific or displayed the remains of antiquity.

I accordingly, on the 9th of December, visited in company with Mr. Green, (a promising young American, and Secretary of the United States Legation at Mexico,) the National University, which also contains the National Museum.

The University is near the Government Palace, and upon entering the great door way, the first object that met my view was the equestrian and colossal bronze statue of Charles IV. of Spain. Since the revolution the Mexicans, in their singular attachments and ideas for every thing republican, have denominated the statue the "Big Horse," and in the same spirit of patriotism, have removed the we ghty construction from before the palace, its original position, at an expense of twelve thousand dollars, within the court-yard, the place it now occupies in the National University.

This statue is boasted to have been originally designed

and cast by Tolsa, a Mexican statuary; yet with much apparent truth, it is contended that it was the workmanship of an Italian artist; be that as it may, it beyond doubt reflects much credit on the sculptor, whoever he was, and I have ever been impressed with the opinion, that nothing to be seen in Mexico can compare with it. The statue is said, with the pedestal upon which it is positioned, to measure about twenty-three feet. Charles IV. is represented mounted on the horse, with a wreath of laurel bound around his brow. He is in Roman costume, with a robe flowing over his shoulders reaching to the horse. In his extended right hand is a truncheon, and a sword on his thigh. The horse is represented as moving forward, with his right hind foot treading on a quiver of arrows. The design and execution of this colossal figure is said, by competent judges in such arts, to be as symmetrical and perfect as any to be found in any country. To me it had an imposing appearance, exciting more of interest than all the objects of the city together.

Under the corridor of the same court is the Sacrificial Stone of Montezeuma, besides many of his gods thrown conspicuously together, but which are said to have belonged originally to the sacred temples of the heathen monarch.

Although this stone bears the name of the Sacrificial, yet it cannot be the one as described by some historians, which had its position on the top of the great temple of Teocalli, for that stone is represented as having a smooth oval surface, so that when the victim was extended upon it, his breast was protruded, and the priest thereby was the better enabled to make the fatal incision, and tear the heart palpitating from the body. The stone now seen, must have been used in some other temple than that of Teocalli, as its weight would have been an ineffectual barrier to its high elevation on that temple. The diameter of this horrid stone is above nine feet, and three feet through. It is sculptured all round with representations of demoniac Indian priests

and unknown hieroglyphics, having some resemblance to those found in Yucatan by Mr. Stephens of New York. The level surface of the stone has singular figures cut upon it. There is a hole in the centre of about twelve inches in diameter and two feet deep; there were also trenches cut from this centre cavity to the outer edges of the stone. The hole, it is said, was intended to receive the blood of the human victim sacrificed on it; and the trenches served the purpose of conducting the superfluous gore from the centre, over the sides of the stone, for the additional uses of the priests. While casting my eyes around me, I could only regret to behold so many valuable curiosities of savage antiquity so indifferently preserved—being heaped together in piles, as if they were but the fragments of stone from a fallen wall.

From the court we ascended a flight of steps, which carried us on the corridor; and the first room we entered, was a gallery of paintings.

The portrait likenesses of this room consisted chiefly of presidents, politicians, generals, bishops, and priests of Mexico. Some of these paintings seemed to my comprehension to have been finished by masters of their art, and all of them were hung in elegant gilded frames. I have been informed, that Mexico once contained paintings of the best artists ever known to the world, but the priests, who left the country after the revolution, took with them the larger portion. These acts resulted in causing the Mexican Congress to enact a law, prohibiting a painting of any kind from being taken out of the country. But that was locking the door after the thief had made his escape.

From the gallery of Fine Arts, I was conducted into a capacious apartment called the Library room. I found in this the librarian, as I imagined, seated at a revolving wheel, deeply absorbed in reading newspapers. On our entering the room we requested permission to examine the library, which he politely granted, but without leaving his

seat to open the cases for our inspection, so intent was he in reading the news. As the case, however, had glass doors, we could easily read the titled labels of the books contained therein. The room was sufficiently large to have contained an hundred thousand volumes; yet the National Library so called, judging by the eye, did not possess more than two thousand. Nevertheless, some portraits and paintings were hung around the room, which exhibited appearances of great antiquity. The books, as far as I examined, proved to be mostly Latin and French works, for in an hour's inspection I did not meet with more than some half dozen Spanish volumes.

From the library room we entered the Museum proper, and it was a source of disappointment to find that that apartment likewise contained paintings which seemed as if they had been hung around the room more for the purpose of ornament, than of establishing a gallery of fine arts. And notwithstanding I had become fatigued by looking at pictures, I determined to give them an inspection, for the fact of their antiquated appearance. They consisted of paintings of the kings and queens of Spain; the viceroys, and bishops of Mexico. Amongst them was pointed out to me that of Ferdinand, as also that of Isabella. But that which chiefly attracted my notice, was one of Hernando Cortes, with the high forehead, and the countenance expressive of that firmness which bore him triumphantly through a conquest unrivalled in the history of the world. Under this portrait was the armour of Cortes which he wore in the heat and shock of battle, and from under which he so much gloried in calling upon his favourite saint "St. Jago," and then rushing on to the charge and the slaughter. The helmet of the Alvorado was also close by. I would suppose that there never had been but one giant in Mexico, from the fact that a full length likeness of one was hanging in the room. This giant had his birth in Jalapa, and measured seven feet in height.

Besides the paintings in this room, there was a miniature representation of two of the profitable silver mines of Mexico. They not only had a rich appearance, but were exceedingly interesting, from the well-arranged specimens of the different kinds of ore as found in the mines. These exhibitions not only showed the various strata of earth, stone and mineral, but intended to present the exact aspect of the excavations under the surface; and by an ingenious toy contrivance, the turning the wheel by which all the machinery used for bringing the heavy metals to the top of the earth would be put in motion—as also the labourers who were at work in the mines, with pickaxes and shovels; while, at the same time, the mules with their heavy packs would slowly move along like things of life.

By this happy construction, the looker-on could be saved the necessity and trouble of descending the shafts of the mines to examine the different specimens of mineralogy, and the modes by which such are disinterred. The mines intended to be represented are those of Rio del Monte and Friznillo. I have no doubt that if some of our enterprising Yankees had them, they would be sure of making fortunes by pedestrianizing the Union.

The remaining curiosities in this room consisted mainly of Indian relics, conchology, and the helmets and armour of the early Spaniards, all of which were badly arranged, if they could be said at all to have order. Among the Indian curiosities were vast numbers of stones, both great and small in size, said to have been the gods of the Aztics. Of that race of people it is said, that, besides the gods worshipped in their temples, every family, as well as every individual, was possessed of gods peculiarly their own, and regarded as the instruments through which only the greater divinities should be appeased. These gods are sometimes of the brute order, while others are of half human and half brute or reptile species. There was also to be seen every variety of rock, knife, and Indian point, besides as much

fashion exhibited in calumet Indian pipes, as ever was seen in any one article. There were drinking vessels shaped like frogs, Mexican rabbits, birds and snakes, intended perhaps for *Pulque* purposes, cart-loads of which are found in the excavations of the city of Mexico, and which likely were buried by the Indians, as it is said they did their silver and gold, during the siege of Cortes.

In the fourth and last room, were the skins of many animals, birds, and snakes, stuffed in an imperfect manner, and not amounting to one-twentieth part the quantity of those to be seen at the National Institute at the city of Washington. And besides other exhibitions to be seen in this room, there were to be met with, in the cabinets of mineralogy, every variety of mineral ores as discovered in all Mexico, the precious metals of which, if extracted, would amount to no inconsiderable sum, besides its value and richness of appearance. It must have been arranged by some classic Frenchman, as the specimens were all habited in the French style.

After I had for some time investigated the bones of a Mastodon, and other fossils which lay scattered over the floor of the room—on raising my eyes in search of other curiosities, the portrait of Santa Anna met my view, and on looking around to discover if there were any others in the apartment, and finding none, I could not but be impressed with the vanity of his friends, or of himself, in thus so conspicuously giving his portrait the entire room, instead of hanging it in the galleries with those of the other distinguished compeers in the country's service.

On retiring from the Museum and the University, I again reflected upon the former grandeur of the city of Mexico, when under the dominion of Montezeuma, whose name must ever be coeval with this great place—and contrasted in my own mind the flourishing condition of the barbaric arts and sciences in his time, with those the Mexicans of the present day enjoy, having the aid of the Christian religion, and the example of the civilized world to instruct them in the laby-

rinths of philosophical research, and lead them through the archives of learning.

The conquerors found at the city of Mexico a menagerie and aviary, filled with every animal, creeping thing, insect, and bird known to their country. The animals, birds, and reptiles being confined in appropriate cages, by a suitable arrangement of large enclosures, were attended by persons appointed for that exclusive business. And what was not inconsistent with Indian taste, the Emperor also had a collection of living dwarfs, who were provided for in consequence of their diminutive size, peculiar physiognomy and singular shapes. I do not consider such an exhibition of dwarfs to have been more repugnant to feelings of humanity, and to public morals and decorum, than the shocking and mournful sights to be seen of preserved infants, in many a jar of the National Museum. Such appearances should belong alone to the cabinet of the surgeon.

Montezeuma had also his botanic gardens, some of which floated on the lakes, and in them were cultivated with great care every variety of flower, plant, and shrub, to please the sight, and adorn his idols; nothing of which are to be seen at the present day. It is true that the old Spaniards did divert themselves in paying some attention to the cultivation of the refined ornamental arts and sciences, but all is now lost —for the Mexican of the present day is devoted to the art of resounding arms, and the desolation of his own country now marks his footsteps with kindred blood, and ruined civilization.

On the 10th instant, by invitation of Mr. Green, I accompanied him to the Conde Paniaski's dwelling, to have a view of his private Museum, which has hardly ever escaped the notice of travellers in Mexico. On our arrival at the courteous Conde's, he seemed pleased to see us, and had the doors of his museum thrown open for our inspection.

The first room we entered contained a valuable philosophical apparatus, which at once demonstrated that he was

learned as well as curious. He had in his collection in that apartment many paintings from the pencils of celebrated artists, together with curious and delicate ivory transparencies of exquisite workmanship, brought from China. Among these, that which most interested my admiration was a landscape view, said to have been cut with a penknife out of ivory. This carved picture presented a back ground of a forest, with a field in cultivation, and on the fore ground was a dwelling, garden, yards, and fruit-trees, all in the most perfect and exact representation. The whole picture was comprised in the small compass of four inches square, presenting the most singular piece of ingenuity that I had ever beheld. He had likewise a fragment of the French shell that blew down the cupola of the castle of San Juan de Ulloa, together with many iron and lead bullets that had been fired upon the battle-fields of his country.

He had also a book of fine fabric, of the maguey, upon which the hieroglyphic writing of the aboriginal Mexicans was painted. Mr. Prescott has remarked—"At the time of the arrival of the Spaniards, great quantities of those manuscripts were treasured up in the country. Numerous persons were employed in painting, and the dexterity of their operations excited the astonishment of the conquerors. Unfortunately, this was mingled with other feelings more unworthy. The strange, unknown characters inscribed on them excited suspicion. They were looked on as magic scrolls, and were regarded in the same light as the idols and temples, as symbols of a pestilential superstition, which must be extirpated. The first archbishop of Mexico, Don Juan de Zummarago—a name that should be as immortal as that of Omar—collected those paintings from every quarter, especially from Tercuco, the most cultivated capitol in Anahuac, and the great depository of the national archives. He then caused them to be piled up in a 'mountain heap'—as it is called by the Spanish writers themselves—in the market-place of Tleetelalco, and reduced them to ashes.

His greater countryman, Archbishop Ximenes, had celebrated a similar *auto-da-fe* of Arabic manuscripts in Grenada, some twenty years before. Never before did his fanaticism achieve two more singlar triumphs, than by the annihilation of so many curious monuments of human ingenuity and learning."

After having looked on many valuable and interesting curiosities in that room, we were shown into an adjoining one that contained his cabinet of mineralogy, which was indeed a rich collection. He not only had specimens of all the minerals in Mexico, but those of other countries in full contrast. His cabinet was arranged in classic taste, as every thing about his Museum and house appeared to be. His collection of coins were numerous, some of them having the stamp of Alexander the Great. The Conde had also in that room the monstrous sight of a preserved infant, with one body, and two well-formed and independent heads.

As my eyes ranged around the room, a collection of brilliant crystals attracted my attention, and as I became deeply engaged in beholding the splendid scene, for at the same time my view was dazzled by the prism, the agate, the topaz, the sapphire, and the sparkling diamond, scintillating as it were, rays of light from their bright surfaces—when behold! in the midst of my admiration, my attention was suddenly diverted by the appearance of a young lady on the opposite side of the glass door near me. Slightly turning by the accident of the occasion, my eyes met those of the lovely fair one, and notwithstanding my whole soul, but the moment before, was enraptured with gazing on the splendid beauties of nature's gems; yet, I must in truth say, that the lovely, smiling young female who then met my view was infinitely more charming and more beautiful to behold, than all the rich and splendid diamonds of the cabinet of crystalization. Indeed, from the first momentary glimpse of her, there was not remaining a single impression on my mind of any of the curiosities of the Museum. While my thoughts

were thus bewildered, the lady, like an angel, glided softly away, and I was roused to self-possession by the voice of Mr. Green, and in a delighted and happy frame of mind, we left the Conde Paniaski's mansion.

On the 11th December, the celebration of the feast day of Guadaloupé, the patron saint of Mexico, took place. The performances on that occasion were not intended as the great festival of the Virgin of Guadaloupé, but only as it were, a *Queriendo*, a wishing, as some called it, to begin a grand exhibition which was to come off on the 12th instant, at the temple erected for the worship of her shrine, three miles from the city.

I was aroused from my slumber, on the morning of the 11th, at 4 o'clock, by the never-failing and indefatigable bells, together with the firing of rockets, making rapid explosions, from all the churches in the city. It did seem to me that the quick volleys of ten thousand muskets could not have made more noise. I rose from my bed to look out, not knowing that the firing was in honour of a feast-day. But my first impressions were that a revolutionary action had commenced, that would make the Dictator tremble on his throne, by the hopeful issue of a new aspirant's attack upon the lion in his den—yet, by throwing wide my window I discovered that all was quiet and harmonious on earth, and above from the ramparts and towers of the celestial buildings, shot the streaming fire high in the air, which showed that the war was only in heaven, whilst men and women were smiling on the scene. But at the moment of the rising of the sun, the combat deepened—for the firing of cannon was opened on earth, and, for all the day, in thundering tones, echoed back the small-arms of the skies.

The religious ceremonies of the day commenced by the inhabitants going to mass in crowds, dressed in their best attire for such occasions. The lazarones seemed, for the time, to have skulked from the streets, by the increased decency of the general public. All the houses of the rich

had in front white flags floating from them, with their favourite saint, the Virgin of Guadaloupé, pinned to the centre, while the high towers and belfries of the churches had the red banners of the cross streaming from them. As evening approached, the rich and the poor, riding and walking, all mixed in one common crowd, in the streets, to join the solemn procession of the occasion, which was to take place at four o'clock. Fire-works were erected at the crossing of the streets, while in every direction I beheld triumphal arches of flowers thrown over the streets, and the archbishop was drawn in his coach and six, attended by servants in crimson livery. In fine, every thing had the most gay and lively appearance.

When the appointed hour had arrived for the saints to make their glorious entry in public, and join the multitude, I saw Joseph, with an infant in his arms, mounted on a splendid car, drawn by men, enter from a church at the extremity of a street, followed by young boys, fantastically dressed, and holding bouquets of flowers in their hands,—then came the Virgin Mary, mounted on a car, similar to Joseph's, but borne on the shoulders of men, and having a golden wreath floating over her head,—and with her gown covered and glittering with precious ornaments. With meek humility, contrasting strangely with her rich attire, she seemed to smile benignly on the good people around her. She was escorted by a party of priests, a band of music, and a company of soldiers; and, as the pageant passed along, amidst the roar of the firing of the rockets, small-arms and cannon, the people uncovered themselves in profound respect to the glittering procession.

As I followed on after the crowd, and arrived opposite the gate of San Francisco, I discovered there a priest holding in his arms the wooden child, the same which I had seen Joseph bear. The eager multitude around were vieing with one another in their embraces of the infant. In my own profession, in acknowledging my obedience to God and

his Son, as known to mankind, through the means of the Old and New Testaments, not considering it necessary, in keeping the commandments and precepts inculcated therein, to declare homage or fealty to any Christian denomination,—the scenes of that day impressed my mind with the folly and superstition of mankind in their attempt to worship with pomp and show the Supreme Head of the universe, instead of giving unto him that reasonable service which he requires at the hands of his creatures.

The fete of the 11th inst. was not to be compared to that which was to take place on the succeeding day, at the church erected in honour of the Virgin Saint of Guadaloupé, three miles from the city. It will not be improper here to state the origin and history of the patron saint of Mexico; and I protest, that in so doing, my object is not to deride, or impose upon the minds of the credulous, but to relate the prominent features, as often recounted to me, with all the semblance of truth and hearty belief, by several Mexicans.

It is said that, on the 8th of December, 1531, an Indian, by name Juan Diego, was seated on a rock on the mountain of Tepeye. Being overpowered with fatigue, (being then making a long journey,) while taking his rest, the Virgin Mary appeared to him, and directed him to go to the city of Mexico, and say to the bishop, that she desired him to worship her on the spot they then occupied. The Indian forthwith arose and went into the city to obey the commands of the Virgin, but upon the following day returned, and informed Mary that he was but a poor Indian, and could not obtain an interview with the illustrious bishop. She commanded him to return, and insist upon being heard. In compliance, Diego returned the second time; and, on the following day, said to the Virgin, that the bishop required a token from her to give his statement validity. Whereupon she ordered him to go upon the mountain and pluck some roses, and bring them to her. The Indian, in going there,

was surprised to find the roses growing on a mountain where there was no soil or vegetation. He presented the flowers to Mary, which she threw on his *serape*, and directed him to carry them to the bishop. The Indian, having presented the serape to the holy man, he unfolded it, and, behold, not only the roses were therein, but also he found a full-length portrait of the Virgin Mary. The bishop could no longer disbelieve, and the Indian informed him that the image on the garment should be called the Virgin of Guadaloupé; whereupon the archbishop ordered that a splendid church should be built on the spot, to commemorate the *miracle*.

Having taken a coach, my route lay north from the city. A great portion of the way was on one of the two causeways, which stretch over an arm of the lake, jutting between the city and the church. The ride was delightful, and I felt much refreshed by having quit the noise and bustle of the city, and at the delightful prospect of the lake, and the trees scattered along the margin of the causeway.

About midway to Guadaloupé, I observed a small village of dirt mounds, where the inhabitants lived like burrowed rabbits, and, indeed, there was a chapel, built of the same mud and earth, having a belfry; and, having no shape of bricks in the structure of the walls, these dirt hovels presented a bold contrast with the city behind, and the wealthy church in front.

When I arrived at the celebrated temple of Guadaloupé, it seemed to me, from the appearance of the crowd through which I had to pass, and the confusion which reigned there, as if all the world was about to congregate at the shrine of the Virgin. There was a vast number of padres and friars, who had assembled from all parts of Mexico, to worship at the feet of their patron saint. Canaliso, the dictator, *pro tem.*, and all the members of his cabinet were there, dressed in complete uniform. All the diplomacy were there, dressed in honour of the great saint-day. The thronged and mixed multitude presented a most singular appearance, in contrast

with the gaudy uniforms of the civil and military functionaries. The black, the grey, and the white habits of the clergy, with their long shovel hats; the foppish appearance of the arriero and the ladrone, with the broad-brimmed hats, with silver or gold bands, light laced jacket, large pants with buttons dangling down the seams, and red sash around the loins; the common citizen, unable to make any show; and last, though not the least in number, the Indian and greasy lazarone, all mixed in one common herd, formed an unpleasing and distressing sight.

Besides the many shops in the row of buildings, which extends round the church, there were many booths all over the Plaza, in which commodities of all kinds were offered for sale, affording to the hungry the means to satisfy his appetite, and, to the pious, images of saints for their worship. But their business was not confined to these; many of these booths were filled with dealers of *monte*, a game resembling *faro*—and with casters of dice. In fine, every thing in the way of *game* was offered under the eaves of the sanctuary, and the protection of the Virgin.

Here was seen every description of character at play—the civilian, the soldier, the priest, and the citizen. It is not my interest here, to make fictitious statements of any thing I may have seen in my visit to Mexico; but, on the contrary, desire to please all people; and, if any Catholic should take exceptions to my remarks, he cannot deny that they are true, for the world has proof as strong, I was going to say, as holy writ;—at least other testimony than mine. My purpose is to write a book of my travels; and whatever I have seen in church or state I shall use my prerogative, independently, in approbating or condemning, as I may conceive just and proper. However, be it said, of the Roman Catholics of the United States and of Europe, that they have not their holy religion corrupted by Indian rites and shows to win the savage and uncultivated to the Christian faith.

It is now nearly four centuries since the Indians of Mexico were converted to the Christian religion, and surely it is high time that the church should be purified. But I not only stood and saw the fathers of this institution under the shadow of the shrine they worshipped, betting at cards and other games, but I was more than once credibly informed, that the church itself was the holy owner of many of those gambling tables.

My first desire was to enter the church, and, having succeeded, I was impressed with the power of that religion which so extravagantly used the wealth of the world to decorate itself withal. All the banisters and railings, which met my view, were of silver. The large chandelier, which hung by a gilt chain from the dome, was also, I was informed, of the same precious metal. As I entered, the many candles it contained were about being lit by a man who had ascended by a ladder, and mounted the chandelier, walking with ease around it, until he had illuminated the tall tapers. The altar before the Serape, which contained the express image of the Virgin, so miraculously wrought by herself, was of silver, and was surrounded by a forest of gold and silver candlesticks. The Serape was contained in a gold frame, with a glass door, five or six feet in length, and, besides a multitude of other diamonds, there were nine large stars worked with diamonds, supposed to be worth twenty thousand dollars. At the foot of the image are clusters of diamonds. Above the serape is a solid dove of silver, suspended in the air, some three feet in length.

The arched domes of the chapels were highly gilded and painted with representations of angels flying in the clouds. The ceremonies were long and solemn, during which mass was taken. I was told that, on one of those festival occasions, a priest from old Spain was requested to deliver a sermon, and he refused, saying that the Pope had never recognized the miracle of Guadaloupé. The motto of the church is, "*non fecit taliter omnia nationе.*" The services

being long, I spent a portion of my time in examining all within and without. To the rear of the church, but attached to the building, is a chapel erected over a fountain, and with the water the worshippers not only crossed themselves but washed in it, believing that its efficacy was the same as the pool of Siloam. Up the side of an abrupt mountain of rock above the church, a winding-path conducted me to a small chapel, where also religious services were performed.

During my rambles over the place, my attention was directed to an old padre who stood in one of the large doors of the church, and whose fingers were covered with diamond rings. My friend also pointed to his large gold shoe buckles, that were thickly set around with diamonds. The precious metal and brilliant stones bore a remarkable contrast to the old clergyman's black gown and shovel hat. By the way, I put myself to the trouble to ascertain the diameter across the brim of one of those hats, and it was precisely twenty-eight inches. The brim is rolled up at the sides, and the front and back parts present a shovel-like form—hence they are called shovel hats. To those who have a vague idea of Mexico, and the religious ceremonies of that people, it will appear that it was an national festival, and that the President, *pro tem.*, and all of his cabinet were there in their elegant uniforms—consequently, when nobles come to worship, the priests must, for decency's sake, put on their fine jewels. I think I have heard it defended by Protestants, that religion should be dressed, to make it *respectable* in the eyes of the rich, and, if it should be right in them, ought it to be an error of the Catholic?

The priests in Mexico are numerous. They are to be seen at any time, and in every place. I observed that, day and night, many of them were loafing about the streets and bar-rooms of the city, in their long gowns, reaching from the chin to the heels. My having so recently left a land of temperance societies, it impressed me with some degree of

horror to behold the heralds of the Cross taking their beverages, unrestrained by public opinion, in *Restaurats*. This surprise was more especially felt, since I was aware that, through the instrumentality of the Catholic clergy, both in Europe and the United States, it was that the use of wines and ardent spirits were not only prohibited to that body, but that, by their sober example, and their eloquent denunciations of the habitual or other use of alcohol, they had won the approbation of the world, and restrained their laity as well as themselves from the brutal practices of intemperance. To my own mind, as also in the opinion of gentlemen of the Roman Catholic profession, the clergy of Mexico seemed to act in many respects independent of their brethren of the United States and the old world, and appeared to conceive the performances of their deportment harmless, which indeed in other countries would shock the good sense of propriety of both clergy and laity. However, there is some degree of palliating excuse for the frailties of poor human nature in Mexico—for as the maxim is, that "money is the root of all evil," its abundance there has worked wonders in corrupting the habits and morals of the people of that country—and thus it is that, through the superstitions of the people, the reverend gentlemen had imposed upon their credulity, by impressing on their minds that contagions are atmospherical, and not the result of certain habits. I have been respectably informed, however, that tippling, gambling, and lewdness of habit, though they would appear to a stranger to be general, are not prevalent among all the clergy of Mexico—for perhaps there exists as much piety in some few of them, as in any of those of other denominations, and the Mexicans, of all other nations, are peculiarly subservient and constant in their own way to their religious rulers, and devoted to their worship.

From the best information I could obtain, the church has a fee simple titled right to one-third of all the real estate in the country of Mexico, and, as it is supposed, by

money loaned, secured upon mortgage, have a lien on another third. The revenues of the church, derived from the rents of houses and lands, usury on money, profits from *monte*, donations and clerical fees, are said to amount to many millions, (the precise sum being unknown,) if it could be ascertained. The granaries of the church and the priests husband half of the crops in the land. The government of Mexico can with difficulty pay the interest of its public debt, and support itself; and whenever an instalment is to be liquidated, the money is raised by forced loans. Query, What becomes of the revenue of Mexico? The government in its extremity, in 1841, had all the landed estate of the church assessed, and it is said, by some of the priests too, that nothing but the bribery by the church of the government officers, has prevented the property of the church from being confiscated—it must come! Spain has set the example.

But all this will not avail in relieving the people, unless the government is administered by clean fingers. The revenue, as at present collected, would liquidate the debt of Mexico in two years—at least it is so believed by some, but it falls short of doing so, by the mismanagement of those in power. What, then, becomes of the people's money?

CHAPTER VII.

Return to the City of Mexico. The Theatre. Four Theatres and one Plaza de los Torros. Audience at the Nuave de Teatro. The ladies. The Plaza de los Torros. Audience. Drawing of a Lottery and Bull-fight. Cemetery of Santa Paula. English have the right of burial. The Cemetery. The Chapel. Garden. Flowers. Vegetables. The Portal Way. Orange and Lemon trees. Rows of boxes. Coffins shoved into niches. Gilt Frames. Ornamental Works. Lamps. Mound of human bones. The grave-diggers. Monument to Santa Anna's leg. Return from Santa Paula. The youth John Hill. The College of Mines. Arrangement of the rooms of the College. The Cabinet of Minerals. Models of Machinery. The Observatory. The Observatory proper. Baron Humboldt. Splendid View. Chapel. Politeness of John Hill. Gaming room. Gambling. Influence of Money. Public opinion. Whitewashing the houses. Feats of daring of the Mexicans.

HAVING become oppressed by the fatigues of the day at Guadaloupe, I again took a coach for the city of Mexico. Notwithstanding my desire for repose, the temptation of the Nuave de Teatro was not to be resisted. It was that night to be attended by the fashionables of the city, and the diplomatists with their families. I therefore, in company with some American acquaintances, set out for the theatre.

There are four theatres in the city of Mexico, and one Plaza de los Torros. From what I could learn, the Teatro de Principal, besides the one above named, was much attended by the polite and respectable classes of society. However, a new theatre is about being completed, to bear the distinguished name of Teatro de Santa Anna, which, when finished, is expected to carry the world of Mexico before it.

On arriving at the Nuave de Teatro, I felt gratified at its ample and pleasing construction. Its singularity from the theatres of the United States were scarcely visible, and in but one respect worthy of remark. This was, that the seats of both boxes and pit had well stuffed cushions and backs to them, which is a comfort not to be found in most of the theatres of the Union. Bills of the night's performance were, as usual, handed to the audience, accompanied with

a long and flaming printed controversy between the Spanish and Mexican architects, who in turns had been engaged in the erection of the Santa Anna de Teatro.

But that which chiefly interested me, and indeed, as I was unacquainted with the Spanish language, the grand inducement for me to visit the theatre, was to witness the assembled beauty of the occasion. My seat was secured in the centre of the pit, and in Mexico it is a choice place with many of the ladies, some of whom I had the happiness to see had taken their places near me. As I had desired, my arrival at the theatre was rather early, and by that means I had the better opportunity of observing the play-going folks as they came in. All having been seated, I ventured to raise my eyes from the many charms around me. In the boxes to the left were to be seen some of the Ministers and Consuls from European kingdoms, whose places were graced by the welcome sight of many soft blue eyes, and fair complexions. But principally to the right were to be beheld the languishing and melting dark eyes, with long eye-lashes, of the delicate Spanish brunette complexions, in rows sufficient to take away the senses of any man—the ex-Marchionesses and rich heiresses of Mexico—and as they gracefully waved and flourished their beautiful fans from pit to box, the diamonds on their small fingers were not half so bewitching as their own personal loveliness. I thus discovered from the conversation of compliments by the fan, I had not only to learn the Spanish tongue, but the mystic language of the fan—for the ladies of Mexico are quite Masonic, and with all my intercourse with the people of that country I found that it was as necessary to understand the meaning of their gestures, as of their words, many of which are very significant. The play seemed to go off with the knowing ones very well—the name of it I do not remember. The story of the piece, I was informed, was the history of two lovers of the same belle, one of whom she coquetted with, the other she loved and married. A

dance and a few songs wound up the entertainments of the evening.

On the following day, it being Sunday, I took occasion to visit the Plaza de los Torros, as that would be the only opportunity I would have of witnessing a bull-fight in Mexico; and besides, I wish it understood, those exhibitions always and only happen on that day.

The Plaza de los Torros is of circular form, and capable of holding, as I was informed, ten thousand persons; but on the occasion of my visit, it did not contain half that number. Of such antiquity has the practice of bull-fighting been among this people, that owing to their aversion to discontinue old habits and the innovation of improvements, it is not surprising that a large portion of the audience I beheld at the Plaza de los Torros, was composed of the female sex—of what caste they were I cannot depose.

The evening's entertainment commenced with the drawing of a lottery, which was conducted on a similar plan to the lotteries in the United States,—placing the blanks and prizes in one wheel and the tickets in another. As the prizes were drawn, the judge who presided over the wheels of Fortune, would, with chalk, mark the lucky number on the back of the clown, who also having written the figures on a board in his hand, would then run around the circus with many grimaces, reminding me of the fool with his prize, as pictured on the bills and signs of lottery offices in the Union. The prizes were all drawn, as I was informed, by the judges and the bull-fighters, the highest of which did not exceed two doubloons.

The ring having been cleared, expectation was visibly anxious on all, and they were not long kept in suspense. A noble looking bull came bounding into the avenue, showing every evidence of his *good pluck*, and so undaunted did he appear to meet the consequences, whatever they might prove to be on the occasion, that my feelings were enlisted in his favour, and had the action been of that character, which is

generally supposed by those who have never witnessed a scene of the kind, I should unconsciously have shouted, Hurra for the bull! thinking that he would have had some equal chance in the combat. But not so: six stout Spaniards and Mexicans entered the lists, well mounted on horseback, armed with long spears. With such odds and formidable weapons, a single thrust of which could have terminated the life of the poor animal at any moment, a cold chill was thrown over the whole affair, for it really appeared to be nothing else than murder *a prepense*.

All the interest which my imagination had enkindled of deeds of chivalry, was subdued, and I could only look on the whole spectacle as cruel and brutal slaughter,—cruel, because the bull was by piece-meal tortured into an agony of pain, without having had any chance for his defence. I witnessed the death of several brave bulls. At length a poor horse, without a rider, was placed in the arena expressly to be killed by a bull, which having been done by the infuriated animal goring him in the side, and the horse unable to move out of the way, the *matadors* turned the animal, which lay on his wounded side, over, thus exhibiting the gushing gore of the agonized creature, which, when seen, was greeted with loud shouts from the applauding audience of *bravo torro! bravo cavello!*—bravo bull! bravo horse! I turned from the bloody and heartless scene with contempt and loathing disgust.

Having already seen much of the city, with mingled pleasure, admiration, and disappointment, I still felt desirous of gratifying my curiosity by further investigations of this renowned place. Mr. Green, to whom I felt indebted for his many attentions, accompanied me, on the 15th inst., to the cemetery of Santa Paula, upon the suburbs of the west side of the city.

By the way, the British government stipulated in an article of their last treaty with Mexico, that the English citizens of the Republic should have the rights of burial within

the country, which article of importance was neglected on the part of the United States in their treaty. However, on account of the many grieyances suffered by Americans on the score of matrimony, the United States government has granted to her consuls in that country the power of performing marriage ceremonies, a prerogative which had escaped the treaty making power of Great Britain.

But to return. Having arrived at the last sad home of all the living, I discovered that the cemetery contained about eight acres of land, and was enclosed by a wall of sun-burnt brick, about fifteen feet high. The entrance to this burying ground is by a large gate of handsome masonry, which is on the east side. Upon entering I perceived that, in the centre of the cemetery, a chapel was erected, in which the last funeral ceremonies were performed over the dead. A broad avenue leading from the gate, carried me immediately to the door of this chapel. The avenue is lined on both sides with every kind of flower and shrub, and indeed upon the left hand, between the entrance and the chapel, there is a flower and vegetable garden in a high and lovely state of cultivation. Upon taking a stroll through this garden, I saw, much to my astonishment, the kail vegetable growing as high as ten feet, and having a stalk three inches in diameter. Cabbages were also large, being from three to four feet in height. On inquiring of an American gentleman who had been residing for ten years in Mexico, if the seeds of those vegetables were the same as those in the United States,—he replied in the affirmative, and attributed their mammoth growth to the climate, and the richness of the soil. Although with pleasure I beheld the luxuriant growth of the vegetables and flowers in that garden, yet it would have been with much regret that I should, knowingly, have eaten any thing growing on such a spot,—cultivated as they are with the dust of the dead.

Having retraced my steps to the entrance of the great eastern gate, my first direction was to the right hand, under the

roof or portal way that extended over a broad thoroughfare. Upon the left hand of the walk was a continued row of painted boxes, having the coat of arms on their sides, of dead men's bones crossed, in which were growing, perpetually, the green orange and lemon trees. The keeper of the cemetery lives adjoining its walls, and has servants continually watering and cultivating the flowers and shrubbery in the boxes.

On the right hand of this portal way are situated the niches, where the wealthy dead are deposited, and the arrangement is a most happy one. The first basement (upon which the apartments rest) is three feet high. There are but three rows of niches extending along the sides of the outer walls, one above the other. After the coffin containing the corpse is shoved into the apartment selected for it, (in which there seemed in fact to be no choice, from the irregularity in which they were placed,) the mouth of the niche is then closed, and tightly built up with bricks and mortar. On the face of the closed receptacle, upon marble, or painted and ornamented glass, enclosed in handsome, and sometimes costly gilt frames, is recorded, in golden letters, the name, birth, and death of the individual interred within.

These show-glasses, or marble slabs, generally have epitaphs, with appropriate engravings or paintings, in good taste. And, consistent with Catholic usages, some of these burial-places have lamps with tapers burning in them, either by the side or over the head of the deceased friend or relative. Others are fantastically decorated, agreeably to the age or sex of the departed one, with flowers or ribands, demonstrative of the affection of the living for the dead, and indicative of the felicitous condition of the weary who are at rest. Some of those ornaments of artificial work are of great neatness and elegance.

A berth in one of those niches can only be obtained at the price of twenty dollars, for the term of five years. However, the rich sometimes take a lease for a longer time,

or perhaps for ever. After the time for which the apartment has been rented has expired, the place is then re-opened, and the coffin containing the remains of the deceased is disinterred, and the remnants of mortality it contains are taken from their confinement and thrown upon a large heap of other bones in one common pile. The coffin then, *miserabile dictu*, is split into fragments, and, with other fuel, promiscuously mixed together, is heaped in one mound of as many human bones as the want of lime may require. The pile is then burned; and thus I perceived, with painful feelings, and many melancholy reflections, that, ultimately, whether rich or poor, the ashes of the dead are made cement of for the erection of other clay tenements for the daily dying.

I observed, in one corner of the grave-yard, a vast mound of human skeletons, which were not disposed of, as high as the wall, and at least twenty feet in diameter at the bottom. This pile of dead men's bones reminded me of the historical account, as given by the conquerors, who found in the Aztic city of Mexico, a Golgothic pyramid, containing one hundred and thirty-six thousand human sculls.

Upon the ornamented face of one of the niches I read the name of a Spanish poet, Don Antonio Hessesa, a native of Cuba, who had been banished from Havana in consequence of his liberal sentiments. On another, that of the heroic Joan of Arc, of Mexico, Donna Maria Vicario de Quitana, who preferred to leave her convent and join the standard of her country, under which she performed many feats of valour. She died on the 21st August, 1842.

The grave-diggers are continually employed in excavating graves within the common arena, whether they have or have not subjects for their occupancy, so that they may be ready for some one or more departed fellow-mortals. Indeed it is but little trouble in that cemetery, to shovel up the black and greasy mould to make a grave, which is only

three feet deep, and which is filled up with water as soon as dug, till it shall be provided with a tenant of human clay.

But what diverted my respect from the consecrated place in a considerable manner, and almost annihilated the effect of the useful lessons which the cemetery had impressed upon my mind, of human life and its end, was the beholding the pride and pageantry of a monument, surmounted with the arms and the flag of Mexico floating from its corners, over the mortal remains of the left leg of the immortal Dictator, Santa Anna. The hero must excuse me, for since his leg has become public property, it cannot escape comment, and that too will be made, with blame or praise, as freely as his own deeds, just as his person will be eulogized after he himself shall have descended to the tomb. It was a bold stretch of your leg, General, that you made of it from Vera Cruz to the city of Mexico.

Santa Anna having become disgraced in the eyes of his countrymen, and of the world, on account of his Texian campaign, had retired to his farm of Mango de Clavo, to spend the remnant of his days in mortification. But the good fortune of the French invasion, once more put the warrior into his saddle, at the head of the Mexican army, in the field before Vera Cruz. In a gallant charge made upon the enemy, he gloriously retrieved his character as a brave man, but at the expense of losing his left leg below the knee, by a cannister shot. The wily General at once determined to hobble in some way to the climax of preferment, on the dismembered limb. By a master stroke of genius he, knowing how to please his countrymen and gain power, sent his fallen leg to his fellow citizens in the city of Mexico, accompanied by an eloquent letter, breathing patriotism. The stratagem succeeded, for the shouts and rejoicings of this deluded people as they in triumph thronged in procession through the streets, proclaimed an ill omen to the good Bustamente, warning him of the end of

his administration, and sounding the funeral knell of liberty, and peace at home.

The enthusiasm of the Mexicans was such, that they had hardly finished the inglorious monument, before the usurper, at the head of his army, had made himself master of the government and become the Dictator of the people.

One of the flag-staffs of the monument was broken down, perhaps by some one of his countrymen more daring than the rest, to retrieve the honour of his country's flag, and show his opposition to the highest authority upon earth.

It would have been believed that the critics of the civilized world had debarred any people, not excepting the Mexicans, from displaying in future the ostentation as exhibited upon the field of Waterloo, in erecting an obelisk over the fallen limb of the Marquis of Anglesea, an acknowledged soldier, and a high-minded warrior. It is true that while Arnold the traitor was in London, he inquired of an American—what the people of the United States would do with him, if he should return to his home? The American replied, that the leg in which he had received an honourable wound, in the cause of liberty and independence, would be cut from his body and buried with all military honours; but that his body would be hung between heaven and earth, as a traitor to his country.

True it is, that Santa Anna deserves the gratitude of his countrymen for the loss of his blood and the sacrifice of his limb, in defence of Mexico; yet it must be hoped that he never may meet the fate of Arnold had he returned to the United States. It is related of the Mexican hero, that a boot and shoe-maker of the capital manufactured a wooden leg, upon which he was enabled to have a good substitute for the departed and monumental limb; to reward him for which, the Dictator commissioned him a Colonel of a regiment, but with the express understanding that the boot-maker should manufacture his boots and legs as long as he lived.

On my return from Santa Paula, I was much pleased with the opportunity that presented itself of visiting the College of Mines. Upon our arrival at the building, we found it to be of large dimensions, and partaking more of the appearance of a modern edifice than any other in the city which I had seen. Here we fortunately met with the Texian youth, Mr. John Hill.

This interesting youth, born of American parents, was the youngest of two other brothers, who were taken prisoners at the assault of Mier, and brought to the city of Mexico. Young as he was he had the bravery, at the early age of twelve years, to fight so desperately at the side of his father, as, to the knowledge of others, to kill fourteen of the enemy—and, even after his father had surrendered, the intrepid boy maintained the conflict until his gun was forcibly taken from him.

Upon the arrival of the prisoners at the seat of government, in consequence of the tender years of John, and the admiration the Mexicans had for so brave a boy, he was granted the freedom of going at random in the city, and not kept in strict confinement with his father and brothers. Having thus possession of his liberty, he made application to Gen. Thompson, requesting him to appear in behalf of his imprisoned relatives, in the presence of the Dictator. The General, pleased with the manly youth, advised him to make his petition himself, in person, to the supreme authority, for the liberty of his father and brothers. Through his agency an interview was obtained for this purpose, with Santa Anna, and Master John proving to have a sufficiency of the Spanish language to plead his own cause, he did so with so much smartness, that the Dictator not only consented to set his father and brothers at liberty, but informed the hero and young solicitor that he would adopt him as his own son, give him an education in the best schools of the Republic, and when this was completed he should have his choice of a profession.

Young Hill consented to the kind and liberal offer of Santa Anna, and his father having received his liberty, gave his approbation to the agreement of his son with the kind Dictator. Thus the heroic little boy found in the greatest enemy of Texas, the adopted country of his father, his best friend, and one to whom he could feel grateful all his days. He was, at the time I saw him, a student in the College of Mines, the principal institution of learning in the Republic.

Mr. Hill was glad to meet with us, being Americans, and promptly proffered his services to show us the College. He made application to his guardian, General Tornel, Minister of War and of the Navy, a professor in the Institution also, for the keys, (as it being then vacation time, the apartments were locked,) which he obtained, and I could not but remark the pleasure the young man took in showing us every thing worthy of notice. It was with pain to us, and some confusion to himself, as he was conducting us from room to room, it was observable that he was forgetting his native tongue, by being often very much in want of English words to express himself. On such occasions, he would supply the deficiency by the use of Spanish, and individuals have assured me, that whenever the young acquire a new language in a foreign country, they will invariably lose their own native one.

After he had conducted us through the different rooms of the institution, all of which were to be admired, although upon a different arrangement from the manner in which Colleges are usually conducted in the United States, as each class had to attend its particular professor in their several separate apartments, there to study their recitations, and receive instruction from him in person; this plan prevented the student from idling his time away in his own room.

He showed us into the room containing the cabinet of minerals. The collection was more numerous than any I had before seen, and would have been a rich treat, for any

geologist to have examined—for there were varieties of specimens of all the mineral kingdom, but more abundantly of silver and gold. This apartment also contained many models of machinery, as used in the mines of Mexico.

He likewise conducted us up to the Observatory. In the first apartment of this there is a spacious room, containing two large telescopes, besides a variety of other astronomical instruments for observations. From that room we ascended up to the Observatory proper, and it was with a degree of pleasure and pride that my footsteps were planted upon the same platform where Baron Humboldt stood, when taking his astronomical observations of Mexico. Like him I comprehended in the same view the two high volcanic peaks of Popocatepetl and Irtacuhuatl, lifting their gray heads to heaven; while the distant Orizava, mantled with snow, and resplendent with a halo of light crowning its lofty summit was seen, and then the nearer prospect of porphyritic rock mountains, stretching their natural defences around the lovely plain of Mexico: while in perspective the distant lakes stretched their arms like seas, as the havens of Montezeuma's city. The temple of Guadaloupé looked like a splendid monument at the foot of the mountain, and the puebla of Tacaba appeared to be only the country residence of a prince. The broad city of Mexico was spread at my feet. The golden sun of the National Palace dazzled before my eyes, as also the bright porcelain domes of the churches. I had then, for the first time, an opportunity of beholding distinctly the flower-gardens upon the flat roofs of the houses, the sight of which was a lovely one for the admirers of both vine and blossom. While standing upon this most elevated place, above all the other edifices, I was reminded of Cortes, when he was taken by the hand, and led by Montezeuma to the top of the temple of Teocalli, where was pointed out to the conqueror the locations of the place, and, in the language of Mr. Prescott, "below them lay the city, spread out like a map, with its streets and canals inter-

secting each other at right angles, its terraced roofs blooming like so many parterres of flowers. Every place seemed alive with business and bustle—canoes were glancing up and down the canals—the streets were crowded with people, in their gay and picturesque costumes—while from the market-place, which they had so lately left, a confused hum of many sounds and voices rose up in the air."

Our young friend conducted us down from the Observatory, and I was pained to perceive, as he was unlocking the door of the chapel, that he had forgotten the English terms by which such places are denominated. With a blush, he said that he was about to show us the room where the students knelt; and although he felt with some confusion that he was losing his native tongue, yet he had not forgotten his manners. It was a pleasing sight to behold in a youth so tender in years, as he opened the door of the chapel, with reverence and respect for the holy place, take off his hat, before entering the consecrated prayer-room. He seemed to take a pleasure in informing us where the students knelt, and described the watchfulness of the old chaplain that they should perform their devotions with decorum.

From the chapel we were shown into another part of the building, which contained a billiard-table, dominoes, chess, backgammon and draught-boards. This room is devoted to the recreation and amusement of the students, during vacation hours. And, when we take into consideration the habits of the Mexicans, and the location of the College, I could not discover the impropriety of the apartment, knowing, as I do, that it is a part of the accomplishment of a Spanish gentleman to be skilled in the art of these games. Besides it was obvious that it was better for the student thus innocently to spend his time, in a mental and bodily exercise, instead of loitering about the streets, perhaps in the dissipation of a large and populous city.

If not permitted to leave the college walls during intervals, he surely should have some agreeable mode to while

away the allotted moments for recreation. Gambling is prohibited by the express regulations of the institution, and thus the youth is taught the scientific usefulness of those games, at the same time he learns to despise the acquisition of gain by them. It should be remembered that, in those sunny regions, the polished Spanish gentleman prefers rather to indulge himself in the moderate exercise of a game of billiards, or else to seat himself in one of his rooms with marble floors, than to fatigue himself under the burning sun of that climate. I do not pretend to defend the gaming room of this college, upon the system of morals and religion of the Protestant creeds of faith—for while the reformers are mortified at not correcting that, and other evils of wealthy society, it should be remembered that in Mexico the vice of gambling is tolerated by the church. Hence it is that what suits some people is very improper in others—for, as already remarked, as it regards the habits of the Mexicans, it would appear that a knowledge of the science of games is an accomplishment, very important; as there is in every public, as well as in most of the houses of the wealthy, a billiard and gaming-room, which is always crowded, and not to play is to render yourself unfit for polite society.

Thus it is perceived that, in consequence of the indolent habits of the Mexicans, growing out of the abundance of nature, and their few wants, together with the warmth of their climate, they have necessarily been taught to amuse themselves, while they thereby escape the heat of the sun. And while, in a cold climate, athletic exercises in the open air would be more improving to bodily health and strength, and at the same time less demoralizing, the prevalence of gambling and playing at games is predominant in the affections of the people of Mexico, in a degree inimical to the individual prosperity of their species.

I was informed that Santa Anna was in the habit of giving feasts expressly for the dissolute. But every thing the

Dictator does, although it may be law, is not morality or religion. The practice of gambling in Mexico is so respectable, that he who is able to establish himself in its pursuit, by keeping a monte-bank, rather ascends than declines in public estimation. This has its origin in the fact that the prosperity, or presumed wealth of an individual, stamps his caste in society, no matter how his riches are obtained, whether by fair or foul means, yet he is privileged according to the amount of his store. And such must always be the case, where, in the state of social compact, in any community, merited virtues and humble honesty, though poor, are disregarded, and which when beheld by those who should be the protectors of morals and good order, who instead of fostering, rather cast the chilling blast of silent neglect over them, thus affording a poor encouragement to virtuous deeds. Public opinion, in some instances, in every country, has done some good; but, as it regards the "almighty dollar," it has most egregiously sinned against itself by rather corrupting than improving the moral condition of society.

There are two colleges in the city of Mexico, and one university. If there were more I did not learn their names or their locations.

By a decree of the government, the houses of the city are all to be painted or white-washed on the outside, once in every twelve months. This operation was being performed while I was in the place, and I could not help observing, on my return from the College of Mines to the Gran Sociadad, the marked difference, in the improvement which it made in the appearance of the houses. The city, had on my first arrival, a dirty and dull aspect—but no sooner had the painter and white-washer began to flourish their brushes, than the capital, like a young girl dressed for a ball, put on a more cheerful and gay appearance. I was often astonished at the feats of agility and strength, as also of daring, which the Mexicans had in ascending and descending the high

walls of their buildings, by the aid of a *petre*, a rope made of the maguey plant.

On one occasion, I saw a man who had been engaged in painting the walls of a convent, ascend a single rope, hand over hand, about fifty feet. When he had reached the cornice of the upper portico, another Mexican who was standing awaiting his arrival, with one hand hold of the bannisters, reached down, and with the other grasped the man on the rope under the arms, and lifted him with ease on to the cornice of the portico. Crowds of people would stop to witness those feats, and oftentimes the air would be rent with shouts, when some exploit more adventurous than others was performed. The longest ladders cannot reach half way to the top of many of the buildings, and the painters are often seen suspended at the end of ropes, in baskets made for the purpose, and let down by this means over the top of the walls. They occasionally fall and lose their lives, as was the case, in one instance, from a house opposite my lodgings.

In passing through a street of the city, I observed a window filled with engravings. I paused for a moment to examine them, and to my surprise discovered that they were unfilled bank bills; and, upon minuter inspection, perceived that notes of the principal banks of most of the States of the Union, were thus exhibited to public view in the window of a Mexican engraver—the Brandon notes not excepted. Bankers should look to it, lest their vaults may be filled with paper instead of specie from Mexico.

CHAPTER VIII.

Ramble in the Alemade. Circles, fountains and statues. Names of Hidalgo and Iturbide. The carriages, walks and crowds of ladies with their fans. The Pasio. Fountains of water. Statues of the Azetic gods. Carriages passing up and down. The Cavaliers. The management and trappings of the horses. A walk without the walls of the city. Beautiful country scenes. Christmas-day in Mexico. Grand mass celebrated at the cathedral. Crowds of people in the Plaza. Merchandise of the hucksters. Confused scene. Brokers. Night. Pine torches. Intoxication by drinking pulque. Narrow escape. The cathedral crowded. Grand mass. Raising of the Holy Ghost. Splendid view of the richness of the cathedral. Reflections. The services of the cathedral last all night. Mexican ladies. Premature debility. Paris fashions. The social habits of the ladies. Courtship by letters. Gentlemen in disguise. Ostentation at the theatre and pasio. An English lady. Rebozoes. Los ire. Festivities of Christmas-day. The dictator, pro tem., and suite. Yankee driver. The big show. Plaza de los Toros. Human affairs. News of a British fleet. Mr. Doil, the British charge de affaires. Suspended relations of the two powers. False alarm. British jack on the plaza.

My morning's excursion having been made to Santa Paula, I determined that my evening's enjoyment should be devoted to a ramble over the alemade, a promenade or park, and along the pasio, a ride, of the city of Mexico.

These places are the morning's and evening's resorts for the recreation of all the wealthy; and here are to be seen the pride and fashion of the city, whether native or foreign.

The alemade is within the precincts of the city, although on its margin. It is enclosed by a wall, and contains about twelve acres of land. Within, it is thickly grown with elm and other trees. Between the wood and the wall around it is a carriage-way, and rows of seats for pedestrians, from corner to corner. The whole is divided into well-flagged walks, and, at suitable distances, are large circles, having fountains of water spouting high in the air. In the centre is the largest of those circles, having a statue of the Goddess of Liberty, in gold gilt, mounted on a pedestal, with two gilded lions crouching at her feet, while spouts of water are issuing from their mouths. On the sides of the pedestal hang two flags, on which appear, separately, the names of Hidalgo, who gave birth to the Mexican revo-

lution, (Sept. 16, 1810,) and of Iturbide. Thus, in singular contrast, are exposed from the statue of the goddess, the name of the first revolutionary and republican patriot of Mexico, and that of its emperor.

Soon after my arrival at the alemade, the carriage-way was thronged with vehicles, mostly having ladies seated in them. Notwithstanding their loveliness was attractive, and the twirling of the fans was ominous of good tidings to a lover, or of compliment to an acquaintance; yet it could not but appear awkward, if not unnatural, to behold a young lady take from her bag a flint and steel, and, by the friction of a blow or two, ignite a piece of spunk, and, having lighted her *cigarrito*, (segar,) puff volumes of smoke from her nostrils and from between her beautiful lips. The carriages, after passing round the alemade a few times, would drive out of the southern gateway, and continue their journey to the pasio. Crowds of ladies and gentlemen filled the walks and the seats of the circles of the alemade; and I was informed that, on such occasions, letters of love affairs were freely exchanged between the sexes.

Being satisfied with my view of the rural and delightful alemade, I followed the direction of the carriages to the pasio. This is on the road to the pueblo of Tacaba. The entrance to it is by a gate-way, having in its centre a tall fountain spouting high the water. It is surmounted with a statue, resembling more the description of the Aztec war-god than that of any other image. There are several other fountains to cool the evening breeze.

The pasio is about one mile in length, and the coaches, after passing up and down the ways a few times, would halt at one side, while others, which had just arrived, would drive backwards and forwards before them as if in review. By this arrangement any one individual would have an opportunity of beholding all other visiters, who had made it their business to see and be seen. It was amusing to behold the cavaliers, mounted, with all the paraphernalia of

the costly trappings of their animals, with whip and Spanish spurs, galloping up and down the pasio, as if they were trying the speed of their horses, or escaping from the ladrones; while others, more desirous of attracting attention, would, by a pressure on the rein of their bridles, cause their horses to raise their feet high and quick, as if dancing to the tune of Nancy Dawson; and then, when a fair eye is caught, make the animal plunge as if he had a ten-foot wall to leap.

My walk to the alemade and pasio afforded me, not only much satisfaction at beholding the customs of the people of Mexico, but I also enjoyed a degree of pleasure from having been relieved from the heat and confinement of the city. To go thus outside the walls, and breathe the pure country air, with an animated and invigorated system, makes the imagination glow with delight. Such is the loveliness of the landscape scenery of lake, plain and mountain; while the pueblo of Tacaba, at a distance, seems like a city on a hill; and the royal retreat of Chapultepec, on *Chapultepuc monte*, Grasshopper's hill, is beheld through the lofty cypresses of centuries in growth, seated on the side of a mountain, looking like a palace of fairy enchantment. Such a prospect makes the soul swell with emotion, and with a buoyancy of spirit; the scenes of nature are endeared, and existence rendered of more value to the possessor.

As the evening was drawing to a close I was admonished, on my way to the pasio, by a murdered corpse, which was exposed, for the recognition of friends, at the celebrated prison of the Acordada, to return to the city.

My Christmas-day was spent in the city of Mexico, and, during all the day of the twenty-fourth, my ears were constantly saluted by the *querieud a dar*, or the wishing to ring of the bells, to inform the good people, that the great mass was that night to be celebrated at the cathedral. On the evening of that day I took a walk to the plaza, to witness the gathering of the people at that place. Great crowds had assembled, from distances in the country, of men, wo-

men and children, who had spread upon the pavements their fruits, and goods of all kinds, intending to reside upon the spot during all the Christmas holidays. Under the corridors of the private buildings, around the plaza, were crowds of citizens, examining their trinkets and other commodities, brought by the hucksters to market. I observed that many were the dollars expended in worthless things, to be used as Christmas compliments. These holiday merchants had not opened their goods for a temporary residence of a few hours, but had located themselves for day and night, as each individual had prepared him or herself with a *petate*, mat, upon which to slumber when wearied.

The scene was truly most confused and lively; more so than any I had ever beheld; and I, for the time, began to think that there was some enterprise amongst the Mexicans; for it was the only sight I had discovered like business since I had been in the country.

By the way, it would not be improper here to remark, that all business, of merchandise or otherwise, is done in Mexico, through the *corredor*, a broker. If an individual wishes to purchase a lot of goods, he employs a broker to transact the affair for him; or if any other bargains are to be made, the same agency is used. The vender, and the actual vendee, have no occasion to know one another, for the broker is supposed to keep in his bosom the name of the individual for whose benefit the purchase is made. In this manner much chicanery is used by these agents, who are constantly seen pimping and prying into every man's effects, without knowing who is in want of his goods or property. The brokers comprise a large class of the community, and are ever ready to buy or sell any commodity. They must, however, be watched, for they are great rogues.

At night, it being Christmas-eve, I again visited the plaza, in company with two of my American acquaintances. The scene was much heightened, in its interesting confusion, from that beheld during the day. The multitude of holiday

merchants, who thronged the side-walks, were now scattered all over the plaza, seated on their mats in Indian fashion, and only discoverable through the dark volumes of smoke that circled upwards from the pine torches; and, as the crowd of citizen spectators passed to and fro, and the guards of soldiers, with their bright weapons gleaming through the smoke of the torch-light, marched along, the whole formed a scene more picturesque than any encampment of the kind I ever beheld.

But, as the hour grew late, the interest I had before taken was diminished, by discovering that many of both sexes were intoxicated by drinking *pulque*, the essence of *maguey*, a cheap liquid, used mostly by the lazarones.

It happened that, just as we were making up our minds to leave the plaza, it was my lot to have a serious warning to depart from thence. As I was passing along, a few steps in front of my friends, a supposed intoxicated Mexican rushed from a crowd near me, and, with a long knife in his hand, exclaimed "*Que mureram los estrangeros!*" Death to all strangers! I did not know what the wretch said; but, from my friends calling to me, and from a scuffle which ensued between the assassin and his countrymen, I quickly learned that the Mexican designed to attack us. We then visited the cathedral, to witness the ceremonies of the night.

On my entering this splendid cathedral, although it was at a late hour, the vast building then contained one thousand and upwards, of worshippers. These were composed of all castes and characters of both sexes. The place, indeed, appeared to be a solemn one to me; and who could look with indifference or disrespect over so vast a multitude, all kneeling in adoration of that being whom I, from my first impressions, was taught to reverence. And, as the sacred chant and solemn peal of the organ ascended the high vaults of the cathedral, my thoughts, for the time, were turned within, and my secret aspirations were involuntarily

raised to Him who had sustained my being at home, and in the midst of people of a strange land.

I have always had a respect for those who worshipped God in any form; and, it is true, that I have never beheld the great Maker of the universe worshipped in so magnificent a manner. Notwithstanding it was contrary, agreeably to my education, to the simplicity of that worship required of his beings, as exemplified by Christ and his apostles, yet the scene amidst the blaze of a thousand candles, shining with resplendent brilliancy in that vast edifice, could not fail to impress my mind with the solemnity of the occasion.

As I contemplated all around me, and the ceremony of raising the host was proceeding with great gravity, while the whole congregation bowed before the holy image of the cross, it seemed that there was more of form on the occasion than the understanding of the heart; and, as my eyes were again directed towards the altar, the banisters and pillars, the organ and the vaulted roofs, the polished surfaces of which were all of silver and gold, I could not help exclaiming within—"All is vanity and vexation of spirit."

The ceremonies at the cathedral continued during the whole night. At the hour of two o'clock I returned to my lodgings at the Gran Sociadad. I should not close my remarks of this night's exhibition without saying a word or two respecting the ladies of Mexico; for, on this occasion, I saw a larger collection of them than I had an opportunity of doing during my stay in the country. The number who collected in the cathedral on this night was considerable. They were all intermixed with the common multitude; for here, as well as is the case in the other churches and chapels, there are no seats for the congregation; and the worshippers can stand, kneel, or sit upon the dirty floor, as their inclinations or necessities may demand, except during

certain parts of the services, when they are required to go through particular formalities.

In the manner above described, I had an opportunity of casting my eyes over a promiscuous crowd, and of contrasting the beauty of the Mexican with the European ladies; for here were people of every clime and complexion. From my observations of the Mexican women, as I saw them, both in public and private, I considered them generally handsome. For the most part, they are low in stature. They have invariably black hair and eyes. The skin of some have a tendency to fairness, in proportion to the care they have taken of themselves, and to their alliance with Europeans; yet, in the main, they appear to be sunburnt, having generally a florid complexion, which gives them a singularly beautiful aspect. The largest portion of them, however, have a dark brunette or Indian cast. The expression of their countenance, in general, is distinguished for its mildness and gentleness; this, added to their suavity and languishing air, makes their deportment peculiarly interesting; and, I could almost say that to see one of them is to love her.

The ladies of Mexico, who have advanced to middle age, as I observed, had mostly a tendency to be plethoric. The old matrons have the most enfeebled appearance of those of any country I had ever seen, their features being deeply marked with the furrows of age. The effects of accumulated years, in this high arid climate, not only lay violent hands on the natives themselves, but all who have resided long in that dry and hot atmosphere have an appearance of having been "parched, wearied, riven." The skin too has a dark, crusty aspect. I once heard a wag remark, that it was his opinion, a French doctor would do well by introducing into the country an apparatus for puffing plumpness to the skin.

Premature debility and declining aspect, is also attributable, no doubt, to the fact that young ladies, in that climate,

commence the career of life earlier than is the custom in more northern latitudes. I have not unfrequently seen, especially among the lower classes, a mother of the age of thirteen years, while the husband and father was only a lad of eighteen. Hence the consequence must be, that the mother of some five or six in number, at the youthful age of twenty or twenty-five years, must feel and appear to have a broken and wasted constitution; while those of a colder clime, and double their years, will yet be athletic and healthy. By this healthy bloom of cheek, our widows are encouraged to hope for her second, or, perhaps, third husband; thereby encountering double and treble responsibilities.

The most fashionable and wealthy circles of Mexican ladies are not only very tasty, but extravagant in dress, following, in the main, all the varieties and change of pattern, as practised at the fountains of fashion in Paris; for the city of Mexico is well supplied with French milliners, both men and women. I have been informed, that a Mexican lady never wears the same dress to a ball a second time, although it may have cost her some five hundred or a thousand dollars; for silks, laces and satins are very dear in Mexico.

The social habits of the ladies of this country are very friendly and kind among their neighbours and acquaintances. The frequency of visiting is not practised among them. Their calls on one another are short and friendly, yet made with a degree of formality and courteousness of conversation which restrains the natural warmth of character.

It is with much prudence, and only upon Sundays, that they permit themselves to be visited by young gentlemen, and that only between the hours of ten in the morning and three in the evening. The entertainments of small tea and dancing-parties are but little encouraged and practised among them, while their amours are chiefly conducted in writing. By the way, it may not be improper to give an

idea how some courtships are managed. A gentleman or lady who has had the shaft of Cupid to stick deep in the heart, expresses the passion by sending a letter to the object of their affections. If favourably received, this course is continued until their desires are consummated.

But, where the wishes of the parties are anticipated to be in opposition to those of the parents or guardians, the lover not only writes, every clandestine opportunity which presents itself, but in disguise, if fearful of observation, with slouched hat, and cloak or serapi drawn over his face, he will take his stand at the corner of a street, and in this manner, while basking in the sunshine, will indulge himself for a whole day, in beholding the charms of his adored one, who, perchance, now appears upon the corridor or portal, and then at the window, resembling a lone dove imprisoned in a cage, which, by wistful, languishing looks and perturbed motion, longs to be free, and cleave the heaven so much beloved.

It is not unusual for some swains, who have been debarred from the opportunities of sending a letter, to take the occasion, when the fair one is on the portal, to pass by, and, at the proper distance, suddenly throw open a sheet of paper which has a word or two written in large letters, so that the eyes of the lady may decipher it, eagle-eyed as they are to read. In these cases a syllable is as much as a volume.

The reader, however, is not to imagine, from the above description of the manners and customs of the ladies of Mexico, that each has not her moments of ostentation, gaiety and coquetry. For if you could see her, when exposed to public gaze, visiting her favourite places of amusement, the theatre, the alemade, or the pasio, you might then behold her, from her sumptuousness of dress, and by the light quivering of her fan between her delicate fingers, as she saluted those of her acquaintance who may come under the notice of her love-sparkling eyes;—I say, you might there behold a being whose heart is susceptible of the warm-

est sympathies of our nature, and whose charms, on such occasions, hover like the evening rain-bow to embrace the spell-bound spirits of her admirers.

But little can be seen of the Mexican lady, excepting on great ball and procession occasions; then, the elegance of her person, the modesty of her manners, and the cheerful loveliness of her smiles, never fail to feast the soul of the beholder.

The females of Mexico never wear bonnets, but cover their heads with an article of dress called a *reboso*, a kind of shawl some six feet long, and nearly half the same in breadth. This reboso not only covers the head, but is closely drawn over the face; and, by being crossed in front, obscures the bosom. I did not, but upon one instance, see a lady wearing a bonnet, and she was a European. I was informed that all ladies from abroad, on their arrival at the city of Mexico, conformed to the prevalent customs and fashions of the place, in walking and riding with uncovered heads. However, I was pleased to see the English lady, with great good sense, maintain the privilege of the bonnet, and not throw aside a comfort and an elegance to gratify the intolerant and bigoted spirit of the natives, who scorn any other ways than their own; and the lady, if she saw me, little knew how unconsciously she was delighting a stranger, who, by the sight of her bonnet, was reminded of those at home who lived supreme in his thoughts.

However, the ladies of Mexico, on appearing in public, covered with their reboso, are, on some occasions, a little kind, in having but a small portion of this article of dress over their heads, the folds of which, by an inadvertent cast of one of her hands, will drop, and, for a *moment*, the beholder is blessed with a view of her bosom and waist. And, what is astonishing, she will not unfrequently be seen holding a corner of her shawl, or handkerchief, over her mouth, to prevent the deleterious effects of breathing the pure air; as the Mexicans universally believe that all of their mala-

dies are derived from the atmosphere. Hence it is, that if you perceive a Mexican with his head bound up, or look dejected otherwise, his reply, made with a shrug of the shoulders, and a leer of the head, will invariably be, "Los ira"—the air.

There is no purer atmosphere to be found on the face of the earth than is breathed on the plains of Mexico; yet the Mexicans seem to apprehend more detriment from it than from the *vomito* of the coasts. But as I advance on my journey up the country, I shall give my attention again to the "*los ira.*"

The twenty-fifth of December, Christmas-day, was also marked by many other festivities. There was during the whole day, the firing of rockets from the churches, and of cannon from before the national palace, at the plaza. In the evening, General Canalizo, the dictator, *pro tem.*, in his coach of state, accompanied by his guards of lancers, commanded by a general officer, rode through the streets to the alemade and the pasio. To inform plain republicans in the United States, that it was an extraordinary sight for the first officer of the republic of Mexico to appear in his coach, would not awaken their imaginations to the gaudy and royal state in which such things are done there. But never was I more surprised, and indeed indignant, than when I beheld the chief magistrate of a republican government aping the gaudy show and circumstance of royal pride to please and gull a gaping people. I had thought that in the enlightened age of the nineteenth century, republicans of all the continent of America had thrown aside and disdained the tinsel of monarchical pageantry and aristocracy, basing their noble bearing alone on the soundness of their constitutional principles, and devotion to their country's weal.

But so far from the Dictator of Mexico appearing in plain garb and equipage, and like Washington assuming in public to be nothing more than a servant of the people and a private citizen,—Gen. Canalizo had his coach literally fringed

and covered with gold; and I hardly knew which the most to admire, the splendid uniforms of his coachmen, or that of his own. But for the fact, that the Dictator, instead of the driver, wore the *shopo*, and was seated within, I would have mistaken that Yankee, mounted on his seat like a golden throne, for the Dictator pro tem. of the Republic of Mexico.

There were also Generals dressed in full uniforms, attending as outriders to his Excellency, while not less than a hundred lancers were his body guard. Hang down your heads ye respectable republicans and generals of the United States! for you cannot aspire to being postillions and body-servants to the most high in authority.

Having seen the big show of the Dictator, I followed the crowd to the Plaza de los Torros, for I was not satisfied with my speculations, upon the different castes of society, and the moral tone pervading each. Having convinced myself that decent and respectable portions of society, embracing both sexes, visited the shows of bull-fighting, I attended the exhibition, remaining there as long as I could do so with any degree of ease or comfort. I observed a mother with three children, call their attention so particularly to the scene of blood, that they might not escape seeing all the cruel performances of the occasion. I soon left the barbarous amphitheatre, never intending to enter it again.

It often happens in human affairs, that, when the fields look most gay, and pleasures are flooding in upon us, almost producing an elysium upon earth, sudden reverses will overtake the unsuspecting, and turn the glee of mirth and the pomp of pride into trembling, fear, and wailing.

So it happened, that just at the present crisis of Mexican affairs, on the glad day of Christmas, the news reached the capital, that a British fleet had arrived before Vera Cruz, to demand satisfaction for an insult offered to the British flag by the Dictator of Mexico.

Upon my arrival at the city, I found that not only the Mexicans, but foreigners of all nations, were much excited on the

subject of the difficulty between the two nations, which grew out of an affair that happened at a national ball, given by Santa Anna at the Government Palace. The Dictator had directed that the ball-room should be decorated with the trophies of flags which had been taken by the Mexicans in battle. Among the number, conspicuously placed, was the English Jack.

On the arrival of Mr. Doyle, the British Charge de Affaires, who was an invited guest at the ball, he discovered that one of the ensigns of his country was spread out as a trophy, to decorate the brilliancy and glory of the occasion. Mr. D., in the prompt performance of his duty, peremptorily demanded of the Dictator of Mexico, that the Jack should be taken down, as a flag had *never* been won by the Mexicans of the English. The Dictator did not hesitate to veto its removal, and Mr. D. immediately, in the just spirit of resentment, left the palace, and as a British sloop of war was lying at Vera Cruz, he despatched her home, with information to his monarch of the insult offered to her flag.

The anxiety produced by the suspended relations of the two powers, not only caused confusion with the English in Mexico, but with all other foreigners; as a state of war would throw many obstacles in the way of all, particularly those who had to travel, and who spoke the English tongue. For the Mexicans are so prejudiced, that, when at war, they do not spare or protect private citizens, or any who belong to the enemy of their country.

It was amusing to witness the commotion of feeling produced, upon the news of every arrival of a ship at Vera Cruz. A thousand well-authenticated different rumours would be circulating at the same time among the people, and it did occasionally seem that the good people of Mexico almost heard the British bomb-shells, cracking over the castle of San Juan de Ulloa.

Nevertheless, it proved that, up to the 5th day of January, no English fleet had arrived off the coast. The go-

vernment, in anticipation of the desperate result, had ordered troops to Vera Cruz, to fortify the fort and the city; but men and officers positively refused to obey orders, declaring that it would be certain death for them to undertake to defend the city.

The government had therefore to send a despatch to the British Queen, announcing its willingness to surrender the Jack to any of the English authorities empowered to receive it, with the exception of Mr. Doyle. Thus making a personal affair of the whole difference between the Charge de Affaires and the Mexican Dictator. I should not be surprised, however, if her Majesty obliged the Mexicans to deliver the Union Jack, with a royal salute, to his Excellency, upon the Plaza.*

* Since the above was written, the British Sovereign has received the apology of Santa Anna, and Mr. Doyle was recalled.

CHAPTER IX.

Indisposition of some of the Deputies. A failure of a quorum. The Deputies installed. Speech of Canalizo. Reply of Ximenes. Celebration of the installation. How things are done in Mexico. Worship of the Golden Sun. Firing of cannon. Splendid illumination of the Cathedral and Plaza. Installation of the President elect, Canalizo, the proxy of Santa Anna. Celebration of the installation of the President. The worship of the Christian, a happy exchange for the native. Grand parade of all the military. My stay in the city of Mexico. If the will of the people was known. Mr. Green gave me notice not to leave the city. Copy of the secret order. Determined to take the advice of Gen. Thompson. Gen. Thompson's negotiation. My opinion. Mexican persecution. Two Americans imprisoned at Guymas. Who are the Mexicans? Union of the European and Indian blood. Comparative difference of the Christian and Savage worship. Mild disposition of the Mexican. Love of country. The Mexicans are a motley race. Solemnity and sadness of countenance. Mexican politeness. Confidence in no one who cannot blush.

In consequence of the indisposition of some of the deputies of the Mexican Congress, as communicated by letter to the Dictator *pro tem.*, a failure of a *quorum* occurred. Therefore, upon the day in course for the regular installment of the members, the house could not be organised. This indisposition of the deputies was supposed by some to have been more the result of a mental than a bodily cause, in consequence of their disgust with the politics of the country, and their want of confidence in the Dictator; as they, during their last session, were driven from their seats by military force. And I was forcibly reminded, by their excuses, of the Seminole chief Sam Jones, who, when commanded by General Jessup to come in and surrender, returned word that he was lame, and could'nt walk.

The deputies were not installed until the first day of January. I took the opportunity of visiting the palace in company with an American gentleman,—who, from a long residence in the country, not only knew men and politics, but understood the Spanish language well,—and witnessing the opening of the session of the house for the first time under the new constitution.

After the speaker had called the house to order, Gen. Canalizo rose from his seat, and, in a handsome manner, informed the deputies of the state and condition of the Republic. During his speech, he remarked that the commerce of the country was in a flourishing condition, and that the agricultural and mining interests were never in a more prosperous state, or yielded larger profitable results. He concluded by eulogising the manufactures of the country, appealing to the honourable body to protect the industry of the nation.

The grave and accomplished gentleman having taken his seat, the majority of the Deputies appeared, by their smiles of approbation, to be gratified with the flattering account which Gen. C. had been pleased to give of the happiness and prosperity of the Republic.

But when Ximenes, the President of the Senate, rose up in his place, which was a throne, under a royal purple canopy, fringed with gold, (as often seen from the pulpit, the only throne in the United States,) he most unexpectedly, soon put to the blush many of the high coloured assertions of the honourable Dictator pro tem.

In his reply to his colleague of the Executive, he most respectfully requested leave to differ with his excellency, who had taken his seat. For in the first place, he stated that, so far from the commerce of the country being in a flourishing condition, it had been almost effectually destroyed by the recent decrees, leaving a prohibitory tariff on most of the articles of manufacture, which were formerly imported into the country. He also said, that he had not been able to discover the good results the protective system had given or could give to any portion of the Republic; for the consumer was obliged, under the decree, to pay from two to four times as much, in many instances, for the elegancies and necessaries of life, as those articles formerly cost his fellow-citizens.

Besides, he said, what the more disparaged him was,

that after they had protected the manufacturer, he was yet complaining of his manufactures yielding no profit, and still demanding the aid of the government, while he was unable to pay any bonus for the monopoly he enjoyed; at the same time, he remarked, that the decree was extracting largely from the pockets of the people.

He also stated, that he was of the opinion that agriculture was on the decline; for although there were no duties levied upon exportations of the products of the farmer, yet, as almost all trade had been lopped off from the country, and foreign powers were compelled to turn the tide of their importations to other parts of the world than their own, and in consequence needed not their surplus produce—inasmuch as other nations were maritime, and Mexico possessed no shipping—the former had to receive a reduced price from the manufacturer for his grain, or else suffer it to rot in his granaries. Hence it was, he said, that numbers of farmers would lose their places upon the Hacienda campus, and would not find employment in the manufactories or the mines; for the plain reason, that there was already a sufficiency of labour, in those branches of industry.

He concluded his remarks by saying, that the mines also had not yielded as in former years; and notwithstanding all these facts, the national debt was increasing, while at the same time the Executive, who in reality was the government, was making demands for increased expenditures and protection.

The reply of the President of the senate, to the speech of the Dictator, turned the smiles of some into frowns; and while others dared not approbate the remarks, at least every learned and profound member looked as if he just had his eyes skinned. After these speeches of the two high functionaries, the house adjourned; for this was all that constituted the installation of the Deputies.

At two o'clock in the afternoon commenced the celebration of the occasion; for nothing in Mexico can be perform-

ed without having rejoicing, and the results of such moves have always happy effects in the benefits which they afford the ambitious with the multitudes of every country, and in winning the favour of the people.

Bonaparte was not deficient in having his bonfires and shows at the corners of the streets, to bribe the common herd; as also his grand parades. And I am heartily persuaded, that processions and shows of rejoicing can be corrupted for ambitious and inimical purposes, to the detriment of the people. It is to be regretted that the people of the United States are suffering the innovation of such humbuggery.

But that the world may know how things are done in Mexico, I will give some detail of my observations on the grand occasion of the celebration of the installation of the Deputies. At the appointed time, the citizens had assembled in considerable numbers on the Plaza, as if they had congregated to worship the golden sun on the palace, or the eight six-pounders which were drawn before that ancient building. As I cast my eyes around, I observed the bewitching smiles of many fair faces, who were blessing some hopeful few; and it was with some sympathy that I noticed the convulsed nerves of the lovely ones, as the thundering peals of the cannon reported volley after volley. The firing of the cannon and the playing of the music continued until the close of the day.

When night came, a splendid illumination of the cathedral, the palace, and all the houses around the Plaza, took place. I could not refrain from going to witness this grand scene. The windows and the tops of the portals of the houses round the Plaza and the palace, all shone with a brilliant illumination, while the margins of the flat roofs of the buildings presented an extensive line of blazing torches, appearing like streams of fire as seen at a distance on mountain heights. But as I turned my direction towards the cathedral, it was then that my eyes caught the full blaze of

light; for from the earth to the top of the two high steeples, it was studded with burning lamps, casting wide their light over the city. And as the illumination shot its rays high in the heavens, like the eternal fires on the Aztic temple, that once covered the same ground, the distant mountains of porphyritic rock seemed to have caught the red glare. It called to my mind the period when all Anahuac worshipped the sun, and when, as the blazes of the torches ascended up to the bright luminary of the heavens, the censers on the fires before the altars contained the hearts of thousands of human victims sacrificed to appease blind and imaginary gods. I thought of that unfortunate period in the history of the conquerors, when forty of their number, who had been taken prisoners by the barbarians, were marched in long procession, within the distant view of their companions, who could not come to their rescue, and with solemn chant were seen to wind their way around the high temple up to its top, there to be extended upon the jasper sacrificial stone, and with breasts protruded and frantic screams, have their hearts torn out, held to the sun, and then thrown to the altars of their sanguinary deities.

Although the illumination revived in my memory those past historical events, yet the present temple, I reflected, was erected to the one, true, and living God of the adorable Trinity,—the Christian's God, proclaiming "peace on earth and good will to man," and if corrupted in its purity, still it is the Christian religion which is preached within its walls; a happy exchange for the idolatry of former days.

On the following day the President elect was to be installed. Gen. Santa Anna was not in the city, but had returned to Mango de *Clavo*, immediately after the period of the big national ball, when he made the fatal mistake with the British Jack, in making it a glorious trophy. Doubtless the vanity of the man, in his desire for fame, had persuaded him, as well as it wished to impose upon the credulity of his people, that he had achieved a victory over the red

coats, when every body knew that he had never done any other fighting, besides the massacreing of his own people, saving the mishap of San Jacinto, and the gallant loss of his leg at Vera Cruz.

Santa Anna, the President elect, under the constitution of his own creating, was empowered to appoint the electors, and of course they were obliged to return the compliment by electing him who had appointed them, their president. The installation was by proxy,—Gen. Canalizo, his man Friday, representing the President elected.

Although Santa Anna had, upon that day, laid down the absolute powers of the Dictatorship, yet it was a mere farcical exchange of names; for the title of President, under the instrument which he called the *constitution*, gave him all the dictatorial functions that he might require.

The day which ushered the *quondam* Dictator to the presidency had likewise to be celebrated, and as morning dawned, it was hailed by the firing of cannon, continued at intervals during the day. Ten thousand troops, which had been stationed in the city, were taken to the private residence of the president, where, it is said, the wily chieftain quartered them to consume the cattle of his well-stocked haciendas. This left remaining, for the protection of the President *pro tem.*, a force equal to the entire standing army of the United States, of five thousand men. These troops, consisting of artillery, infantry and cavalry, well equipped, paraded the streets early in the morning, marching and counter-marching through every avenue of the city.

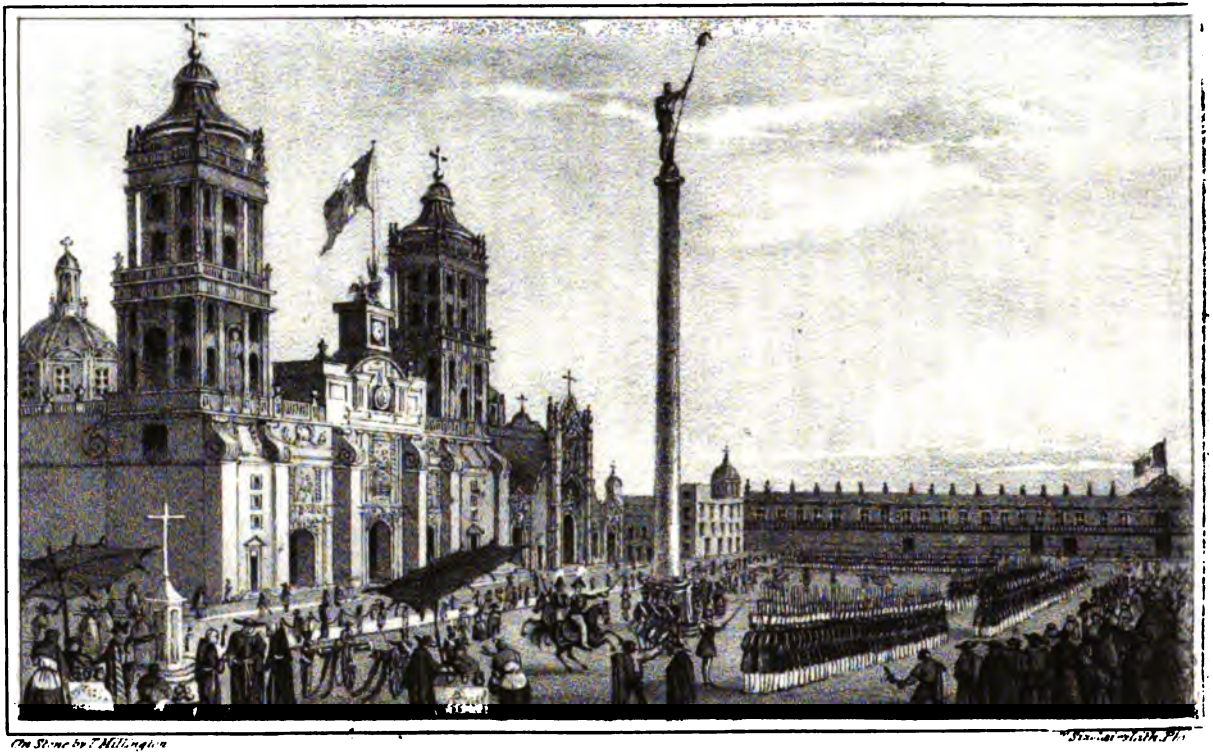
The bands of music accompanying the military were excellent. The soldiers were all good looking fellows, and in the pride they appeared to take in the parade, looked as if they had been well drilled and disciplined. The military are devoted to their master, President Santa Anna; and it is by them, not by the suffrages of the people, that he maintains his power. As I viewed the pompous procession, my bosom was kindled with feelings of native republican pride,

and I renewed my resolve, that as long as the spirit of a Virginian dwelt in my breast, I would never tolerate military usurpation and dictatorial despotism.

It is related by historians that seventy thousand human beings were sacrificed at the coronation of Montezeuma.

In the pageantry of the celebration of the installation of the President, and the exhibition of his extraordinary powers, it was perceptible that the people did not have much heart; for at night, when the illumination took place at the Plaza, I did not see more people assembled than on ordinary occasions. On the contrary, when this spectacle was in honour of the instalment of the house of Deputies, there was an almost impenetrable crowd. Besides, they seemed to have been as much rejoiced as if they had just obtained their liberty and independence. Whereas, when the truly imposing spectacle of the soldiery was presented in the streets, there were few people to be seen,—considering their fondness for show;—and all the day I observed that the inhabitants confined themselves more to their homes, than it was their habit of doing on their festival occasions.

I heard it stated, by more than one Mexican, that the parading of the military was only a stratagem of Santa Anna to intimidate the Deputies in their deliberations; and all the world knew that he had, previous to their installation, issued a decree, that they, the representatives of the people, should not investigate his acts, and that he, as Dictator, *was not responsible to them!* And they had good reason to fear, for they well remembered that the last Congress of Mexico was annihilated and dispersed by Santa Anna's having a regiment of his grenadiers, commanded by Capt. Cortes, stationed at the door of the deliberative chamber, to prevent their meeting. Captain C. is a native of the state of Louisiana. He described to me the history of the day, and remarked, that whenever a Deputy demanded of him admission into the chamber, he was obliged to avert his head with shame, when refusing the supreme representa-



On Stone by T. Millington

CELEBRATION OF THE INSTALLATION OF PRESIDENT SANTA ANNA.

on the Plaza at the City of Mexico.

tives of the people, entrance to their hall; so that by their rightful deliberations, they might preserve the liberties of their country. I heard a Mexican say also, that the soldiers might fire their cannon, and the priests illuminate the cathedral; but if the will of the people was expressed, the palace and the cathedral would both be hung in sable.

My stay in the city was much longer than I had wished, or expected it would have been. My destination to San Francisco, Upper California, being above two thousand miles north of the capitol of Mexico, it was with no degree of pleasure that my delay was extended to a period of nine weeks. The difficulties and dangers I should necessarily be obliged to encounter in the hazardous journey, inland, which I contemplated, were continually oppressing my mind, and I daily desired to commence the undertaking, so that by the toils to be endured, and the change of scene, I might obtain relief.

In the first place, my baggage, that had been promised me by the conductor at Vera Cruz, should be delivered in the city of Mexico in eighteen days, from the time of my departure from that place, did not reach me under thirty-six. Next, in consequence of a communication to Gen. Thompson, from one of the northern departments of Mexico, I received notice through his secretary, Mr. Green, not to leave the city on my journey, until the subject of difficulty, originating from the communication which he had received, had been settled with the government of Mexico. For the entire satisfaction of the public, I will give the order, the subject of negotiation, as furnished to me by the Secretary of the American Legation, in Spanish and English.

"Ministerio de Guerra y Marina.

"Es' mo S'r.

"El. E. S. Presidente provisional usando de los facultades, q. le concede la ley de 22 de Febrero de 1832, y convencido de q. no conviere q. los naturales de los E. U. del Norte tengan su residencia en ese Departmento del mando

V. S. se ha servido resolver que salzan de el, en el termino prudente q. V. S. les fine al efecte, y q. en lo sincero no se admite en el mismo Departo. á mix un individad pertineciente á los Espresados Estados Unidos; debiendo entenderse esta prohibicion aun pava los limitrofes á ese de Californias; á cuyo fin, con esta fecha, hajo las respectivas communicaciones; lo que tengo el honor de decir á V. S. para su conocimiento, recomendandole mui eficazmente el complimiento de esta suprema resolucion.

"Dios y Libertad. Mejico, Julio 14, 1843.

"(Firmado.) TORNEL.

"E. S. Gubernador
y Com. Gen. de Californias."

"En la misma fecha.

"Se inserto esta orden á los gobernadores de Sonora, Sinaloa, y Chihuahua. El S'r Urrea contestó al Gobierno, asegenadole q. yu habid comenzado á obrar."

"Department of War and Marine.

"The President *pro tem.*, by virtue of the powers granted him by the law of the 22d February, 1832, convinced of the impropriety of permitting the natives of the United States to reside in the Department, under the command of your Excellency, has resolved that they should be ordered out of it, within such time as it may appear most prudent to you, and that in future no individual belonging to the above named United States be permitted entrance into said department; it being understood that this order is to apply also even to the frontier of the department, to which, and under this date, I have the honour to make known to your Excellency, recommending you to carry this supreme order into complete effect.

"God and Liberty.

"Mexico, July 14, 1843.

"(Signed.) TORNEL.

"To his Excellency the Governor and
"Commandant General of the Californias."

Accompanying the communication received by Gen. Thompson, of which the above is a true copy, was a note giving the information that—

"Under the same date, the same order has been communicated to the Governor of Sinora, Sinaloa, and Chihuahua. Gen. Urrea replied to the government, assuring it that the order had already been put in force."

The reception of the above order by the American minister, demanded of him to act with promptness and decision. And it should be borne in mind, that upon the issuing of this decree, the American minister had not been furnished with a copy according to usage; but the government secretly communicated its commands to the Governors for it to be put into full effect, before the American Legation could be made aware of its existence, to prevent its nefarious operations. This, too, transpired at a time of profound peace between the two republics, contrary to the usages of nations, and the existence of treaties between the two countries.

I determined therefore to take the advice of Gen. Thompson, and wait the issue of his correspondence with the Mexican government. The General lost no time in communicating a copy of the order to Gen. Bocanegra, Minister of Foreign Relations, demanding to know of him, if the copy of the above order was correct, and acknowledged by the authorities. Receiving no reply to either of his communications, he again gave to his private secretary the third letter, to be delivered to the Minister of Mexico, which informed him, that as it appeared to be the pleasure of the government not to give him that satisfaction which he had a right to expect, he should take the liberty to construe its silence into an acknowledgment of the order, and a determination to persist in its unjust and unprecedented requisitions. Accordingly, being thus impressed, he could not

perceive any other alternative than that he should demand his passport, suspend his negotiations on the close of that day, and take his departure for the United States, if he was not, before the setting of the sun, fully and satisfactorily replied to.

Gen. Thompson, previous to his knowledge of the existence of the order expelling Americans from the Californias, had asked the President of the United States for his recall, and in anticipation of his permission had had all of his effects packed up and shipped to Vera Cruz. There was nothing, therefore, to detain him, being prepared at any moment to depart in the diligencia, if the Mexican minister should not give him ample satisfaction, if the order had been recognised by him,—rescind the same,—and make abundant indemnity for all damages sustained through its means by American citizens.

The General did not receive a reply till after the close of day. The government evidently became alarmed at the firm and manly course of the American minister, and at his consistency of declaration, having entered his name on the way-bill for Vera Cruz on the following morning. His Excellency Bocanegra, to prevent him from leaving the city, had embargoed the diligencia. But after the General had retired to bed on that night, he was waked up to receive a communication from the minister of foreign relations. This contained an apology for his not having received a reply from the government sooner, and acknowledged, *verbatim*, the truth of the order made by the President of Mexico.

But in "acknowledging the corn," as Mr. Randolph said, they stated in explanation, that the odious instrument was not alone intended for the citizens of the United States; but was also designed to embrace the people of all nations; and that it was not to be put into effect, excepting against those who rendered themselves detrimental to the peace of the country, and the good administration of the government by

the Mexican authorities; stating, moreover, that the order had been revoked.

Now, in the name of common sense, if any one can read the order, how can he say that such a construction, tacitly or implied, can be put upon the plain language of the order, as the explanation and apology assumed.

Our minister, for the sake of preserving the peace and harmony of the two countries, accepted the explanations, and thus the affair terminated amicably. My own views on the above detailed negotiation between the two ministers, as I remarked also to Gen. Thompson, convinced me in regard to the order, that it was penned in a hostile and nefarious spirit, looking at the words of it in the most favourable aspect; and I feared much that all friendly relations between the United States and Mexico had ceased, and that the only remedy left for the redress of grievances, on the part of the Union, was to chastise her hostile and unkind neighbour into a just and equitable performance of friendly relationship. The order had for its character, a malicious spirit against an exclusive and peaceful population, who should have demanded the protection of the laws of the country for their enterprise and industrious habits.

The secrecy employed by the insidious minister of war and navy, in issuing the order to the different departments for its enforcement, must appear to the minds of all, to have been a deed of the darkest treachery which the powers of one nation could have betrayed towards another while in friendly relations. And I am convinced, by long reflection and the accumulation of facts, that so wicked, premeditated and wanton an act, on the part of Mexico, should not have been permitted to be explained away, without the assurances of an indemnity for our citizens, for loss and damages, which might have been sustained by the enforcement of the order.

I do not express my sentiments with a view of giving utterance to any unkind feelings towards Gen. Thompson;

for that gentleman must be aware, that his own friendship and politeness, extended towards me, would be an honourable barrier against so base a deed. On the contrary, I have the highest respect for his acknowledged talents, his years, and long experience in public life, and the services, during which, he has rendered his country. Still, I have no doubt, he will excuse me when I say that, although he had the United States executive and senate to think with him, I would much rather he should have demanded his passport instead of receiving the explanation; and thus, by refusing an apology, and the false pretensions of the Mexican diplomacy, he would have made them feel in want of our friendship, and caused them, like France, to fear offending again.

The American citizens, who had settled in the Californias, were mostly of that most harmless of all communities, namely, farmers. And, by one dash of the pen, a decree went forth from the national palace, by which they were all, at the same time, obliged to sell their crops, stocks and lands at a reduced price, in consequence of the glut of the market. This, perhaps, was the design of those in authority, owing to the many expulsions of the old Spaniards, who, escaping with their lives, yet lost their property and valuables.

It would seem that the Mexican government, in their animosity (for I can find no other name to apply to it) towards the American people, take great pleasure in persecuting and oppressing them whenever an opportunity offers to exhibit so unfriendly a feeling. I am entirely at a loss to conjecture the cause, unless it has its origin in the fact that Gen. Santa Anna was defeated at San Jacinto, and that his present minister of war and the navy, when in the United States in the capacity of Mexican minister, received a horsewhipping before Barnum's hotel in Baltimore. And I would here express the opinion, that I know of no power on earth that Mexico should make her best friend more than the United States.

But, as I was about to remark, the disagreeable affair of the order was hardly over before the American minister obtained information, through a highly respectable Spanish gentleman, that in the department of Sonora, of which Gen. Urrea, of Texian memory, is governor and general, at the town of Guymas, there had been, for some time, two Americans loaded with chains and confined in prison.

The information reported to the American legation was, that while the prisoners professed ignorance of having offended against the laws of Mexico, they had respectfully demanded a trial, feeling innocent of any real or unknown allegations; but then, in every instance, they had failed in obtaining justice under the Mexican laws. They had repeatedly written to the American minister at the capital, calling upon him to aid them in obtaining their liberty, and redress their grievances.

As the American minister never received their letters, it was concluded that they were intercepted. It was therefore agreed, between the prisoners and the Spanish gentleman, that, while on a visit to the city of Mexico, having to remain there some time, they should address their letters to him, and thereby the legation would become possessed of their appeal. My departure from the city taking place before any action had been commenced in favour of the unfortunate prisoners, I never learned their ultimate fate.

If I am asked—Who are the Mexicans?—of what people are they?—I would reply, that they are the descendants of the Aztec and Tezcucan races, partly mixed with the Spanish blood; and the Mexican has no reason to be disparaged in being reminded of his ancestry, for an admired historian has remarked, that "enough has been said to show that the Aztec and Tezcucan races were advanced in civilization very far beyond the wandering tribes of North America. The degree of civilization which they had reached, as inferred from their political institutions, may be considered, perhaps, not much short of that enjoyed by our Saxon an-

cestors under Alfred. In respect to the nature of it, they may be better compared with the Egyptians; and the examination of their social relations and culture may suggest still stronger points of resemblance to that ancient people."

I have been taught to believe that a mingling of the European with the Indian blood in North America, and particularly in my own state of Virginia, was a good cross of the human species. For in the Old Dominion there are numerous individuals who pride themselves on their Indian parentage, and who, for their acquirements and position in the civil and military history of the country, stand unrivalled by any of their fellow-citizens.

In the primitive history of every nation, there is mention made of their barbarous and superstitious rites in the worship of their deities. The Mexicans, when the country was first discovered by the Europeans, had many claims to the character of a civilized people. And I cannot conceive why more odium should be attributed to the religious worship of aboriginal Americans, who sacrificed human victims at the shrines of their altars, without the light of truth and revelation; while with every denomination, and every nation in Christendom, the smoke of hecatombs of martyrs has blackened the heavens, amid the frantic shouts of fiendish priests.

When we contemplate the comparative difference in the advance of civilization of the Christian race, who continually hold a direct communication with heaven, through the patriarchs and prophets, and, lastly, by the presence of the Son of God himself, and then draw a retrospect of the Mexican, shut out from a communion with his Maker, with nothing but the light of nature to illuminate his benighted way; confined on a narrow strip of land, between two vast oceans, and the ceremonies of whose faith partake, in some instances, of those of the Christian church; I cannot but admire his majesty, and consider him a part of the noblest workmanship of the great Architect of creation.

As an author, whom we have before quoted, remarks—"One may perhaps better understand the anomaly by reflecting on the condition of some of the most polished countries of Europe in the sixteenth century, after the establishment of the modern inquisition; an institution which yearly destroyed its thousands by a death more painful than the Aztec sacrifices; which raised the hand of brother against brother, and setting its burning seal upon the lip, did more to stay the march of improvement than any other scheme ever devised by human cunning. Human sacrifices, however cruel, have nothing in them degrading to their victim. It may be rather said to ennoble him, by devoting him to the gods. Although so terrible with the Aztecs, it was sometimes voluntarily embraced by them, as the most glorious death, and one that opened a sure passage into paradise. The inquisition, on the other hand, branded its victims, as also the stake, with infamy in this world, and consigned them to everlasting perdition in the next."

I am persuaded in the opinion, that if the present race of Mexicans were taught a just abhorrence of fraud and crime, so that a committal of such deeds could be reached and punished by the laws of the country; and if they were instructed to dread the anger of heaven for such acts of wickedness, his mildness of disposition, and native sincerity of manners, would make him one of the most amiable of the human species. No one can visit Mexico without being forcibly impressed with the polished politeness and kind demeanour of the inhabitants, while at the same time they are ever ready to offer their kind services to forward the intentions of the traveller.

But I would here caution those intending to journey through that country to beware; as under the most accomplished *debonair* of manners and offers of friendship the darkest deeds are concealed. A foreigner cannot be introduced to a Mexican without having his immediate proffer

to be of service to him, and an inquiry of in what manner his assistance may be required.

And again I would say, that from the experience of a toilsome journey, and my intercourse with the people of Mexico for many months, the stranger should judge well of the individual in whom he may place confidence.

I once heard an American citizen express his desire, that the abrupt and often overbearing deportment of his fellow-countrymen could be exchanged for the due deference and agreeable easy politeness of the Mexicans. But as I am not writing a book upon the manners and customs of my own country, I shall not express my sentiments on this interesting subject.

The egotism and love of country of the Mexicans is unparalleled. While he thinks his native land the best on the globe, his opinion of himself does not degenerate; for he believes that his people are the most learned and pious in the world; hence his prejudice to foreigners, and opposition to improvement. When a foreigner has embraced all of his sentiments and maxims, and in every thing fashioned himself after his ways, he will then be tolerated, as all proselytes are, by the opinionated and bigoted, as having been redeemed from ignorance and superstition.

The Mexicans are a motley race, reflecting a complexion in proportion with their mixture with the European blood, and exhibiting, as it were, numberless hues in the same crowd. At the city of Mexico, I beheld every imaginable colour of skin that human beings possess, excepting that of the African; for of this latter race I met with none, as negroes are hardly ever to be seen at any distance from the coasts; and also, from an early antipathy of the Mexicans to the black man, but few had ever been imported into that country.

But to redeem my promise, as made in the second chapter of this book, I will now attempt to give some reasons for the great solemnity and sedateness of the Mexican's

expression of countenance. Mr. Prescott remarks that, "In their faltering steps, and meek and melancholy aspect, we read the sad characteristics of a conquered race."

There is another reason assigned by historians for their gravity of aspect, which supposes it to have been first imparted by the loathsome and revolting oceans of human sacrifices so frequently presented to the public view. And, again, notwithstanding they had obtained the Christian religion, after the conquest, yet the introduction of the inquisition along with it, continued to keep among the people the oppression of spirit and dejection of countenance which has been engrafted upon posterity.

If I should venture to give my own opinion, I would say that this peculiarity of feature is to be mostly attributed to the climate; for in all nations of tropical regions, the population exhibit a languid and grave appearance. And if an artist, judging from what I have seen of painting, attempts to represent a being oppressed by heat, he delineates very much of the same expression visible on the countenance of the Mexican. A learned philosopher once remarked, that he would never have confidence in any one who could not blush; and I am of the opinion that he would find few in Mexico in whom to confide.

CHAPTER X.

Climate of the Valley of Mexico. The climate of the Republic of Mexico. Plains without water. Artificial dams. Monopoly of Agriculture. Interference of the law. Landed estates of Mexico. Table of population. Wealth of the inhabitants. Majority of the people in poverty. Different castes. Want of confidence. Previous to the revolution. The golden age. Embezzlement of Canalizo. Products of the Mines. Solvency of Mexico. Forced loans. Anecdote. The people of Mexico easy to govern. A correct idea of the ministry of Mexico. Capt. Coin. Deformity in Church as in State. My intentions. The Bishop bribed. Matrimony.

The climate of the valley of Mexico is considered to be the most delightful and desirable of any other known region. The valley of Mexico is 7,550 feet above the level of the sea. The capital, from its elevated position, and its being not more than 19° north latitude, is never excessively hot in summer; but to the contrary, as long residents in that country informed me, it is agreeably warm—sufficiently so to make vegetation generate luxuriantly, as I observed it also will in the winter months. Yet it cannot be supposed to compare during the winter months with that state of perfection which the summer season produces. The nights are cool, sufficiently so to render the couch pleasant, was it not for the fleas and other insects.

The climate of the republic of Mexico is by no means universal. The plains have a temperature generally of 62° Fahrenheit. The phenomena of climate that exist in Mexico are singularly peculiar to that country, not being known to any other regions of the earth; for the traveller cannot cross a mountain, without finding its opposite sides varying in temperature. This results from the higher elevation of some plains above others; and thus it is that from the minimum of 62°, many of the valleys, as likewise the coasts on either side of the continent, vary in temperature to the maximum of 120° of heat. Hence it is that the stranger in

Mexico will hear of the tobacco—the sugar—the cotton—and the cocoa regions.

The best tobacco regions are said to be in Tobasco, and in the vicinity of the Orizava mountains. The sugar regions are principally in the valleys south of the city of Mexico, adjoining the Popocatepetl mountain, as also in the hot countries of the Atlantic and Pacific coasts. Cotton grows to its greatest perfection at Paris, in the department of San Louis; while cocoa flourishes at Tampico.

The climate varies very much in regions adjacent to each other, and it often happens that products which are cultivated on one side of a mountain, cannot come to the same perfection on the opposite one. Wheat and corn produce admirably in any of those regions, where the land can be irrigated; and often much expense is incurred in conducting the water from the mountains over the plains. However in some parts of the country, on the first elevation from the coast, nature has most accommodatingly performed the task without the aid of mountain streams; as I witnessed on the high lands between Jalapa and Perote. This economy of nature is owing to the descent of the clouds in that, as in some other regions, as I have understood, to the surface, and, as they gently sweep over the land, the vegetation and the earth absorb the *aqueous vapour* contained in them.

On plains through which no streams flow, and the mountains fail to supply water, the ingenuity of man has invented a mode by which the deficiency may be remedied. Where one plain has an elevation of one portion above the remainder, a dam will be thrown from one hill to the other, across the uneven surface, and in some instances across the ravines of mountains. During the three rainy months of the year, these reservoirs will be filled with water, and thus the farmer can in any month irrigate his crops, and have his land in perpetual cultivation. However, as such an improvement is costly, and but few portions of the country afford the facilities, at least two-thirds of the arable lands of Mexico are

barren wastes that can only be appropriated to the purposes of grazing. And hence it is that that country has ever been famous for its abundance of stock, the proprietor of the soil being unable to derive profits from his estates, otherwise than by herding.

What must ever be a source of regret and oppression to the people of Mexico is, that the government has grasped the monopoly of some articles of agriculture, at the same time they require its permission to grow their crops, and for this privilege they have to take a license or pay a bonus. Although the invaluable articles of maize, or Indian corn, and black beans are freely granted to be cultivated any where, yet by statutes of the land, or by the decrees of the Dictator, the cultivation of all other crops are prohibited, excepting to particular portions of the country, the farmers of those particular localities having to pay for the prerogative.

The government of Mexico is the purchaser of all the tobacco the planter has for market; and only through the *Stancer*, an officer of the government, can the article be retailed to the people. It cannot be difficult to imagine the unhappy results of the interference of the law in regulating agriculture; for so far from the government acting with disinterestedness and good faith with the people—like individuals it seeks first its own emolument, then leaving them to take care of themselves, it abandons the doctrine of the fundamental principles of social compacts—that the law should have a singleness of purpose in protecting labour and the rights of property of its constituents, and not by its acts to trample upon the one, and speculate upon the other. Such has ever been the result of legislation in every country, where the avariciousness of the rulers of the good people has taken the management of their own, and properly, private affairs out of their hands.

In Mexico, by the restrictions imposed upon agriculture, the monopoly of the government has beggared thousands,

who are obliged to indulge in their favourite propensity of theft and highway robbery—for the proprietor of the soil has not the want of their labour, and the factories have no employment for them.

One other remark I wish to make before closing my comments on this head. Out of a population of about seven millions of souls, it is believed by many intelligent gentlemen with whom I conversed, that less than five hundred thousand people are the owners of all the landed estates in Mexico; and the melancholy fact as presented by the face of the country is, that the unequal division of property among the inhabitants must unhappily be as lasting as it is a country. In consequence of its not raining for nine months in the twelve, and there being but few streams flowing from the mountains to the ocean, a small tract of land, of a hundred or a thousand acres, would be worthless to the possessor, unless it was located on one of the comparatively few lakes and rivers.

The man of moderate circumstances, separate from those choice spots of land, is effectually debarred from desiring or purchasing on the plains generally. For, in the first place, a small tract would be worthless to him—and in the next, his inability to buy an extent of territory equivalent in dimensions to any of the counties of our States, renders it impossible for any but the affluent in circumstances to enjoy landed property. In most places lands skirting the water cannot be bought, for if offered for sale, the extensive proprietor would be parting with the privilege of irrigation, which alone rendered the whole of any value.

The reader will readily imagine, in the heterogeneous mass of the population of Mexico, the vast disproportion of lazarones and vagrants, who drag out a wretched and miserable existence, houseless, penniless and friendless, and who, when dead, unshrouded and uncoffined, are thrown into their shallow home, as if their mother earth spurned them from her bosom, to rot as beasts of the field.

The census of the population of Mexico, it is said, can not be accurately taken. From the various estimates made by those having the best opportunities of knowing, a table was furnished me by a gentleman who, from his long residence in the country, and by some attention paid to the subject, may be relied on as measurably correct.

Table of Population.

Indians, - - - -	4,500,000
Other castes, - - - -	3,000,000
Negroes, - - - -	6,000
Total, - - -	7,506,000

From the consideration of the climate, agricultural pursuits, and the population of Mexico, it may not here be improper to devote a few thoughts upon the wealth of its inhabitants and its resources.

As for the wealth of the Mexicans, as already remarked, the great majority of them are in abject poverty, and subsist only by begging, or by their daily labour.

Four of the seven millions of inhabitants are Indians, and with very few exceptions they are not owners of property. The rich people of Mexico are very wealthy, being the proprietors of the soil, and the holders of the real estates in towns. Before the revolution, as now, agreeable to Spanish customs, money was hoarded by the rich in their houses, and never loaned upon interest—and not unfrequently do they run their gold and silver into bars and secrete them at their haciendas or palaces in town.

An instance is related that, during the revolution, the renowned Mina visited the hacienda of Jaral, who being informed that the Conde had secreted his money at that farm, ordered a search, which resulted in the soldiers finding two hundred thousand dollars in actual cash. This practice of burying money has resulted in the loss of millions to circu-

lation—for in Mexico, owing to the *total want of confidence in the nearest relatives*, the father, or the brother often dies without communicating to survivors the place of the secret deposit of their hidden treasure.

I have heard it remarked that the earth of Mexico contained coin and bars of precious metals, equivalent in amount to the proceeds of all the mines for one year. Hence it is that the Spaniards of Vera Cruz, during the first revolution, conceiving of no other mode of preserving their valuables, buried their money at Mango de Clavo, which ultimately resulted in Santa Anna's securing eight thousand doubloons, and the shameful incarceration of six deluded men in a dungeon.

Previous to the revolution, when the country was under the more happy management of the old Spaniards, so considerable was the amount of bullion in Mexico, that some of the wealthy would gratify their pride, when going to celebrate the baptism of their children, in laying bars of gold and silver in a continued row from their houses to the very altar of the church, and upon the precious metals the holy priest would walk to the sanctuary to perform the baptismal services.

But the golden age of those days has passed away with the Mexicans, by the too often occurrence of revolutions, and the crippled commerce of their country; as also by the many profitable mines having gone out of their possession into that of English companies; as well as by the neglect of the working of others. Yet the private fortunes of some individuals are considerable; for I was assured that the Condesa de la Cortena, a rich widow, is in the constant habit of making a regular donation to her son of five thousand dollars monthly; and of her fourteen agents, one of them collects and pays her eighty thousand dollars quarterly.

So repeatedly did I hear, during my stay in Mexico, of a piece of slander, if slander it is, that I have no hesitation in giving it publicity. It is said that General Canalizo, who

was appointed Provisional Dictator by Santa Anna, in two months after he went into power, purchased and paid for an estate worth two hundred thousand dollars; and that previous to his appointment he was not worth one half that sum. It is proverbial in Mexico, that to be a cabinet officer is to make a fortune.

The revolution of Mexico has yet to result in its beneficial effects to its people, for the mining interest has declined in the general wreck and ruin of the country. A table of the products of all the mines in the several departments, is here subjoined. It is a quotation from a new journal issued while I was in Mexico, in opposition to the present system of government.

Product of the Mines.

Mexico, - - - -	2,004,988
Zacatecas, - - -	5,028,655
Guanajuato, - - -	3,476,820
Duraugo, - - - -	876,287
Guadalajara, - - -	908,052
Chihuahua, - - -	568,056
Total, - - -	$13,979,714

As for the solvency of the Mexican government, the British claims alone, without regard to any other liabilities, amount, it is said, to ninety millions of dollars. The government, under its accustomed bad management, has made forced loans from private individuals to pay the interest and instalments of debts; and notwithstanding this has so often been resorted to, yet the prodigality and individual grasping of the rulers, checks any improvement in the financial condition of the country.

Forced loans are made regardless of all remonstrance, and very naturally exasperated the minds of the public against the nation, for whose benefit the payment is to be

made, instead of the tyrants who impose the necessity of it. An anecdote is related, that when Santa Anna was making up the first payment of the American indemnity, among other citizens whom he sent for, to levy his contributions upon, was one Señor Don Luis Alimeno, who had formerly been a foreign minister. Upon the arrival of this citizen, he was required to subscribe a liberal share of the indemnity; but he replied to the Dictator, that he had no money. The despot said, "put down the citizen's wife for ten thousand dollars; she is worth the property."

The people of Mexico are certainly the easiest in the world to govern, or else they would not suffer themselves to be oppressed in so grievous a manner by their government. Santa Anna being informed that the issue of copper coin was too abundant, hurled forth a decree, calling into the mints all of that currency. The holders, without delay, complied with the order, and received in return, not the cash, but government scrip. Although the copper coin in the hands of the people amounted to two millions of dollars, yet the holders of the scrip have not, nor can any one tell when they will receive the just amounts of their funds.

To give a correct idea as to how the government of Mexico pays the honourable demands against it, I will relate a case, the claimant in which, I was acquainted with, and from whom I had, from day to day, a history of the transactions as they happened. While in the city, there arrived an Irish gentleman, a Captain Coin, from the city of Dublin. He had, some two or three years previous, sold to the government of Mexico a steamer called the City of Dublin, for which he never received the pay agreeable to contract; consequently, he was under the necessity of visiting Mexico to recover the debt. On his arrival at Vera Cruz, he visited Santa Anna, who was then at Mango de Clavo, and obtained an order from him on Señor Don Trigueros, the Minister of Finance, payable on sight to Captain Coin

for the steamer. On the Captain's presenting the order to the honourable minister, he was informed by him that there was no money in the treasury; but that he would give him, on his own account, fifty thousand dollars for his claim of sixty thousand eight hundred and fifty. Captain C. insisted on the payment of the full amount, and proposed to accept an order on the collector of the customs at Vera Cruz for the sum. This was refused, and the Captain was obliged to suffer himself to be shaved by the minister of the treasury, or else wait for his money an interminable length of time.

There are things of deformity in the church, as well as the state in this country; carried on by bribery and corruption. And here I would take occasion to remark, that it has not been my design to hunt up matter far fetched and unauthenticated, for the purpose of exasperating the public mind against a nation already rendered sufficiently odious, alike for the want of honour, and the perpetration of barbarous cruelties. My only intention is, to give a few prominent features of the daily practices of those in high as well as low places; so that my readers may have some data by which to judge of the moral and political character of the Mexican people. Such an independent course, in my opinion, should be pursued by the journalist regardless of criticism or the hope of flattery. Nothing I would so much regret, knowing as I do the faithlessness and dishonour of the Mexicans, as to delude a seeker for information in regard to the true character of a people, whose country perhaps it may be his wish to visit or reside in. I shall, therefore, not attempt to seek the praise or encomiums of any, by vouching for the virtue of the few, hard to find, or dread the contradictions and anathemas of those who have never had the experience of travel, or who may otherwise be lucratively interested.

I therefore say, that there are Mammon discrepancies, in church as well as in state, emanating from the very throne

of their earthly divinity. The British government having neglected to insert an article in their treaty with Mexico, requiring of that government to make valid the marriages of British protestants performed in that country; and also, to give power to her consuls to administer the matrimonial ceremony,—Englishmen are subject to the inconvenience and expense of visiting the city of Mexico, and there by bribery to obtain the nuptial tie of the Archbishop; the marriage being null and void otherwise, both by the religious canons and the laws of the land. Of what avail are the high fiats of heaven, or the positive statutes of a country, if money is to set aside the one, and cover the other? Verily, the god of Mammon is supreme over heaven and earth—the Dictator, too, perhaps. An instance of the above described state of things came under my own knowledge; as the parties I became acquainted with, and a happy couple they were; where it cost the gentleman two thousand dollars to *illegally* marry his wife.

CHAPTER XI.

Gratitude to T. Ducoine. Left the city of Mexico the 8th January. A Mexican passenger. Attempted conversation. Chocolate. Arrangements. My first day's journey. Extensive plain. Mountain scenery. Volcanic eruptions. Valleys divested of forest. The soil generally shallow. The rocks. Haciendas. Stone walls. Orgono hedges. Fields without enclosure. The manure of a hacienda. Splendid scenery. No improved roads north. Natural ways. Mijico. Dined at Cula. Description of Dinner. Chille. My first night's lodging. When day dawned. Table land. Arroyo Zarco. The mother of the driver. Fast driving. Cross-bar broke. Ladrones. San Juan del Rio. Conversation and smoking of two Mexicans. View of Gueretero. Aqueduct. A priest and the revolution. A walk at night. Plaza lights. Lost. Guitar. Moonlight. Starting of the diligencia. Ladrones. Escape. Celaye. Monument. Mexicans dressed as Indians. The Pope and the Catholic religion. Three Spaniards of old Spain. Language. Politeness. Landlord. Cotton goods. Third day's travel. Guanajuato. Darkness of the night. Dinner. Night's ramble in the street. Visit to Mexican ladies. Conversation and entertainment. Departure from Guanajuato. Mines of Guanajuato. Magnificent present. Detection of fraud in the Mint. Level country. Silos. Leon. Arrival at Lagos. Lake region. Loss of sleep. Settlements with my Mexican friend. Waked up alone. Chocolate. Letter of introduction. My difficulty. Fruitless efforts to be understood. Fortunate arrival of a Mexican. Attention of the inhabitants. Doct. Tesus Anaya. Interpreter. A large party of travellers. A party of Americans. Appearance of the travellers. Tyler's message to Congress. Manner of warfare upon Mexico. No want of water at Lagos. Vegetables and fruits. Bathing. Walk. Paintings of the houses. American negro. Practice of medicine in Mexico. Angel Gabriel. Simon's wounds. The evening of the second day. Arrival of the diligencia. An American passenger. Proposed journey.

I SHALL ever feel grateful to Mr. Theodore Ducoine, a native of Philadelphia, of the largest American house in the city of Mexico, for the assistance he rendered me in forwarding my departure from the capitol; which took place on the night of the 8th of January; a day memorable in the history of my own country.

I left the city of Mexico in the diligencia for Lagos, a distance of four days' and nights' travel. When I was awakened to take my seat, I found that there was one other passenger, and that the individual I was destined to travel with, was a Mexican, and had all the appearance of a gentleman.

Having taken our seats, the Mexican saluted me by saying, "*Bueno notche Señor*," Good night, Sir,—to which I responded, "*Nil gratias Señor*," I thank you, Sir; by which I

presume my fellow passenger very naturally concluded, from my answering him so readily, that, although a foreigner, I was familiar with the Spanish tongue. No sooner had we passed over the pavement of the city, than he began a conversation with me in his own language, to which I was obliged repeatedly to reply, *No intendi, Señor*, I do not understand, Sir; for I had not been long enough in the country to have studied the Spanish; and I could not consequently undertake a conversation in that language. However, he seemed to persist in his loquaciousness, while the only defence I had, was to keep up a volley of English, which, for short periods, would attract the attention of the Mexican, as he did not understand a word I said.

Having become fatigued in attempting to render himself agreeable to me by talking Spanish, he at length in a most inquiring manner said—"*Parlez vous Francais, Monsieur?*" —Do you speak French, sir? to which I said, "*No, Senor*," which effectually silenced my talkative companion, who, apparently in despair, or disgust perhaps, wrapped himself up in his cloak, and my following his example, we thus, with our mutual thoughts locked up in our minds, played the *dummy* to each other until 10 o'clock the next morning —that proving to be the time of taking our chocolate.

After taking some refreshment, the diligencia being ready for its departure, I offered the lady of the house some money for my repast—but she refused to take it, pointing to my Mexican friend, to whom I shook my head, to intimate that he was not to pay for me; at the same time offering him money. This he refused, repeating often "Lagos," from which I inferred that he would settle my bills as far as that place, as I was unacquainted with the language of the country. Having no objections to such an arrangement, I also said Lagos, accompanying my repetition of the name by placing one dollar upon another, to inform him that I would settle with him at Lagos. Thus we travelled on with

this understanding, which we amicably arranged at the end of our journey.

My first day's journey to Lagos was more interesting to me than I had imagined it would be, as the face of the country presented a different aspect to that which I had already seen. Between Vera Cruz and the city of Mexico, the mountains all run parallel with the Gulf, north and south. But as I had left the valley of Mexico, I found myself before the break of day on an extensive plain, shut up on all sides by lofty mountains, which looked as if they would alike defy man or beast to pass their steep and rocky heights. Although these mountains presented a view, as if they were natural fortresses to imprison all within them, yet at some depression, or as it were gateway, they would offer egress for the traveller, and when passed would only present to the beholder the same plain, surrounded on all sides by a like vast amphitheatre of mountain scenery.

The mountains in Mexico present an entire different appearance from any other in North America; for with very little exception they are uncovered with forest, and mostly without verdure of any kind; saving the gray and green moss. The mountains in resemblance looked more like spued spiral earth of a frosty morning, but upon a more gigantic scale, than any other familiar object known to my mind; having innumerable saw-tooth points and forms of peaks in every zig-zag direction. Indeed, such is the origin of their creation; for not by cold had they been spouted upwards, but by fire; and as the beholder casts his eyes up the giddy heights, and imagines the time when those volcanic eruptions were in existence, they are almost deluded, and it seems as if nature is yet in ebullition, fearfully shooting porphyritic rock high up to the heavens.

All the valleys surrounded by the mountains as above described, from their being so thoroughly divested of forest growth, would appear, but that some of them are spotted with towns and the castles of haciendas, to be vast prairies.

These plains are in fact the table lands proper, while the chains of mountains are the Cordilleras of Mexico. The plains have a fertile soil, but the Spaniards have applied the axe to every thing like brush-wood and forest trees. But although the soil is rich, it is most commonly of a blackish complexion, when not of a gravelly limestone gray appearance. It is generally shallow, and I could observe from the washed gullies that it was not more than from six to twenty-four inches in depth; and it was not unfrequently the case that the rock protruded near the surface of the earth, and that where the land was the least rolling, it had been washed away, and left a barren level rock for many miles in extent. For those whose misfortune has never obliged them to travel upon a plain of solid rock, it is not easy to imagine its disagreeableness; the clatter of the unshod hoofs of the little animals, the lofty bounces and downward plunges of the diligencia, will never be forgotten by myself. The rock is not always of a solid body, for some plains have an appearance of the bed of a river, covered by quartz stone, such as is found at the bottom of most rivers in the United States, (and which is used for the paving of streets,) and indeed must have been the beds of immense lakes in by-gone times.

The lands, as before remarked, whether poor or rich, would produce admirably, which must be attributed to the climate, that is where they are capable of being irrigated. Some of the plains would be divided into two or more haciendas, the larger one of which would be hemmed in by a stone wall of miles in extent—while occasionally a smaller farm might be met with, hedged in by the evergreen orgono, a variety of the species of prickly pear, and the maguey, which would be growing so thick upon the sides of ditches as to effectually obstruct the passage of any animal likely to be detrimental to crops. I could not altogether discover the utility of the stone fences, which in most instances must have cost years of labour, and much money, unless they

were designed for permanent landmarks, or costly ornaments, for they enclosed mostly land that never had been, and never could be cultivated.

Yet, on the contrary, it was not uncommon to see hundreds of acres of land growing in corn and wheat, having not a vestige of enclosure around them. Such fields are watched by the farmers to prevent the stock from feeding upon the crops; and the Arieros take good care that their horses and mules do not diverge from the highway upon the farms. It was wonderful to see the little attention required to prevent the animals from going astray, and nipping down the tempting green corn; exhibiting the fact that the brute creation can be taught honesty—why not the Mexicans? One thing I must not forget to mention, which must excite the contempt of the American agriculturalist—the manure of a hacienda is never spread over the land, but in every instance is thrown out of the way in heaps, and when the winds and sun have sufficiently dried it, it is set on fire and suffered to consume. A gentleman once told me that he had seen a pile on fire for twelve months, the conflagration being very slow.

The scenes as presented in the valleys are beautiful beyond description. The lava heights of those deep blue and brown peaked mountains, surrounding me on all sides, mantled by the azure sky, presented a majestic appearance, while the extended plains beneath wore a pleasing aspect. In such a view all my apprehensions of ladrones were forgotten, and the only thing which would occasionally recall me to the painful consciousness of my journey,-was the violent concussion of the wheels of the diligencia against rocks, and a plunge in and over some deep furrow, worn perhaps by the attrition of ages, of animal's hoofs in the fields. There are no improved roads north of the city of Mexico, excepting just at the entrance of some of the larger towns. The whole plains are crossed and recrossed by thousands of paths, called natural ways, those of which are travelled by

vehicles are such as have been most frequently beaten down, and are therefore the smoother and firmer.

On my first day's journey, I passed the town of Mejico, a place of not much importance, and fast tumbling to decay. However, a considerable garrison of soldiers was stationed there. We arrived at Cula about three o'clock, where my Mexican friend gave me to understand, much to my joy, that we were to dine; for, after a night's travel, I had subsisted all of that day upon nothing but a cup of chocolate. Dinner being ready, I sat down to a meal the like of which I had never before seen, for it was entirely Mexican, and not like the Casa de la Diligencia hotels kept between Vera Cruz and the capital, which were conducted by French landlords, the diet therefore partaking of both French and Mexican variety.

Boiled rice was first served up, which being removed a stew was then introduced—of what kind of meat it was composed I was at a loss first to conjecture, but as my appetite had become in some degree satisfied, it partook more of the flavour of the goat than of mutton. There was also a bowl of chili on the table, which my friend intimated to me not to touch—but I had no idea of letting an opportunity slip of tasting every food used by the Mexicans; so I helped myself to a couple of spoonsfull of the stewed red pepper, and having *walloped* a piece of my meat in the chili, with the hope of taking the goat flavour from it, I then applied it to my mouth. But a hard time I had of it, for my tongue felt as if it had been seared by a red hot iron, yet I continued to nibble and turn over the sauced meat from side to side, with the hopes of finally conquering the fiery portion, and of making a quick swallow of it; as the tears trickled down my cheeks the diet refused to go to my stomach, and fell back again into my plate.

My friend, convulsed with laughter, held his hand between myself and the vessel of water, and shouted—*bina! bina!* Not understanding what he meant, I began to think

that he intended to insult me, by eating of what he intended to be a private dish; but I was not kept long in suspense, for a bottle of claret wine was introduced, and a Mexican girl popping the cork out in no time, filled a large glass and offered it to me to drink; and as the astringent draught passed down my throat, I not only thought that it was the best wine I had ever drank, but felt as if a brand had been snatched from the eternal burning. I could eat no more, although I had a better appetite than when I first began; and taking a glass of wine I left the table, leaving my friend in full possession and enjoyment of his chili sauce.

My first night's lodging was in the castle of a hacienda, the name of which has escaped me now; and having there enjoyed my meal without the use of chili, I slept until two o'clock, when the diligencia again commenced its journey. One thing I observed, and it is to be admired, that Santa Anna had not only, for the good order and government of his people, garrisoned with soldiers all the towns through which I passed, but the haciendas also, which was designed to keep his fickle fellow-citizens from rebellion, and to hold in awe the marauding banditti who infest the highways.

When day dawned I still found myself upon the same table-land, and surrounded by the same mountain scenery as on the day previous. The plain of Gueretoro, over which I had that day to travel, was greater in circumference than either of the valleys I had left behind me, and possessed a more even surface, and generally better looking soil; yet there was less cultivation, as I did not once see water until I arrived at Arroyo Zarco, where myself and friend sat down to a repast, which, whether denominated a breakfast or dinner, I cannot tell, as it was then past the meridian. However, I was more particular than on the day before, and, having better fare, I indulged freely upon boiled rice, broth, stews, tortillas, and frijoles, while my friend sharpened his appetite by mixing chili sauce with every thing he ate. Arroyo Zarco was of less elevation than any of

the valleys I had passed, and yielded an abundance of delicious fruit; and there, for the first time, I partook of several lemons, which were sweeter than any orange I had ever before tasted.

Previous to our leaving Arroyo Zarco, the mother of the driver of the diligencia took a most affectionate leave of her son; and, while she embraced him, she implored all the saints to protect him harmless from the ladrones. All being seated, the driver cracked his whip, and his waiters letting go the lassos, with whoops and shrill whistles, the animals set off with furious speed, seeming as if they would break their necks, or else endeavour to break those of whom they were drawing. Our driver did not, for hill or gully, slacken his speed; but, Phaeton like, he hurled on, more regardless of consequences than any other Mexican driver I had travelled with. His animals at length, in an exhausted condition, arrived at the rancho, where there was to be a change, and from the severe jolting I had received during the last ten miles, I determined to get out of the diligencia to relieve my limbs; my Mexican friend followed my example. When I had descended, I discovered the driver exerting an unusual haste to put into gear the second team, and I noticed that he often raised his head, and cast a lingering look to the rear as if expecting the approach of some one.

The team being harnessed, the driver asked us to take our seats, and, with all the usual noise on such occasions, the animals, on the onset, plunged so vigorously forward that, without having moved the diligencia but a few feet, the cross-bar in front of the tongue snapped in twain, by which accident, not being furnished with another, we were subject to a delay until the broken bar was repaired.

I took this opportunity of descending to the ground, and the first thing that attracted my attention was the driver looking to the rear as before; I determined also to keep my eyes turned in that direction. It was not long before I

espied six men, well mounted, making for us with full speed. My friend shook his head, and the driver went sluggishly to work to mend the cross-bar. Three of the men dismounted close by; the other three rode directly up to us, one of them stopping close by my side.

It was not difficult for me to understand who these men were, and I was not unprepared to meet the emergency; for in each of my breeches pockets was a six-barrel pistol, and to my side a good Bowie knife. I kept my hands upon my pistols, determined not to commence self-defence too soon, but with a watchful eye take advantage of the first move of the ladrones. The chief, as I presumed him to be, of this banditti, commenced a conversation with my friend, while the remaining five had, in the mean time, surrounded myself. The conversation, I could discover, was all appertaining to me, and while thus in suspense I resolved to disencumber myself from my guard, and accordingly stepped forward from them; but they followed, and my friend shook his head at me. The driver had for some time finished his repairs, and was waiting the issue of what might happen. They returned, and myself and friend again took our seats, and the diligencia went ahead. When we arrived at Gueretaro the Mexican gentleman informed me, through an American we met there, that what had prevented our being plundered was, that he assured the ladrones that we had no money, more than would pay our expenses to Lagos, and that as I was a foreigner, and had two six-barrel pistols, they would have to hazard too much for the little they would gain.

In the evening we passed San Juan del Rio, where our company was increased by another Mexican taking passage with us. Our new companion was of genteel appearance, and I felt myself sufficiently entertained for the balance of the journey to Gueretaro, by listening to the discourse of the two countrymen, and the continued exchange of politeness between them; first one and then the other pulling out

their little bundles of cigaritos, and circling the smoke through their nostrils; and at times so voluminous were the clouds, that the diligencia reminded me of an old Virginia smoke-house in the pork season.

By the setting of the sun we arrived in view of Gueretaro, a beautiful town, situated in a ravine near a mountain. The valley of Gueretaro was what the Mexicans called a hot country, and it was therefore with much delight that I beheld there the orange, and other fruit-trees, in bearing. The city of Gueretaro contains about ten thousand inhabitants, and is one of the best improved places I saw in the Republic. The well-finished aqueduct from the mountain to the city is supported on arches, and painted red; and as it stretches over the green valley it has an elegant appearance. Gueretaro is a cotton-manufacturing city. One of the factories is owned by a Mr. M'Cormick, an enterprising American gentleman.

Gueretaro is famed for its revolutionary efforts: it is related that the revolution commenced at that place by a conspiracy formed by a priest; but a few days before it was to have been consummated one of the party, who was possessed of the secret, having been arrested for a crime for which he was to suffer death, fell upon his knees before the prefect, and made declaration that if the judge would spare his life he would divulge the secrets of a conspiracy, of which he was an accomplice, which confession would save the Spaniards from otherwise inevitable destruction.

The prefect, having consented to the reprieve of the criminal upon these conditions, was informed by him of the insurrectionary designs of the Mexicans of that city. But the priest having in time the exposure of the plot communicated to him, hastily summoned all the bell-ringers of the city at his house, where he invited them to drink wine. The men having become intoxicated, he then directed them to go to their churches, and ring all the bells, and proclaim

revolution and death to the Spaniards. The stratagem succeeded, and before sun-set on that day, all the Spaniards, who had not secreted themselves, were barbarously slaughtered, and the warrior-priest proclaimed general of the rebellious forces.

After myself and friend had taken some refreshment, he invited me to take a walk, and, although it was night, we went over a good part of the town. The most of the people whom we met were either soldiers or priests. The plaza was an interesting scene; at least an hundred torches were blazing at once, sending up their light; while some of the people were retailing their goods, seated under their expansive parasols, other buyers and sellers would be seen standing in groups around piles of fruits, as the musical rippling of the water, spouting high in the air from the fountains around the plaza, glanced back the beacon lights. Having been satisfied with our stroll, we attempted to find our way back to the Casa de la Diligencia, but failed; and, after following my friend through several streets without success, we again returned to the plaza, where he inquired for the direction, by which we reached our hotel.

On arriving at our room my friend appeared to be in ecstasies at hearing a guitar played in the house, and he did not seem contented until he had obtained the loan of it, and the instrument was being strummed upon by his own fingers. He was an excellent performer, and, whether it was from the music of the guitar and his voice, or in consequence of my fatigue, I fell asleep, and did not awaken until the diligencia was ready to depart, between two and three o'clock in the morning.

No other seats were taken besides those of myself and my friend to my right hand. At that still hour of the night, when nothing could be seen by the bright moonlight but the heavy walls of the houses, it did appear, when the diligencia started, by the usual shouts of the drivers, and the thundering noise of the wheels over the pavements, that

soldiers and citizens must have been waked from their slumbers.

Onwards we hurled for about three squares, when we made a sudden turn round a corner, at which I perceived men dressed in serapes, stationed along the sidewalk of the street; and as the driver passed each one he was commandingly hailed. He did not heed them however, and cracking his whip urged the speed of the animals; but it seemed that the last man of the party did not intend that the driver should escape him, for he raised and pointed a carbine of some sort, vociferously calling to the *coche*, driver; the poor man was obliged to draw in his reins, and, as six individuals were approaching, the head of the party had the temerity to put his foot on the step of the diligencia. While in the act of thrusting his head through the window, I thought of my six barrels, and as the ladrone showed his face, it was at the muzzle of my pistol, which he had no sooner seen than he stepped back and inquired if that was the Mexico diligencia? and the driver answering him that it was the Guanajuato, we were permitted to go on. For the remainder of that night, with apprehensions of ladrones, I rode with my hands on my pistols, for I felt determined to fight, no sooner than I should hear the dreadful command of "boca baje," as it is called in Mexico.

During that day's travel we passed the town of Calaya, a beautiful and well-improved place. The public houses were large, and built of hammered stone. I observed a handsome monument, surmounted with the Goddess of Liberty, which would reflect credit I thought upon the artist. It seemed, from the crowds of people I saw in the streets and plaza, that it was a feast-day at Calaya, and as I left the city I was convinced of the fact; for, as the diligencia passed over the bridge near the town, I discovered a large body of Mexicans, dressed as Indians, dancing before a saint, on an altar thickly adorned with flowers, and I had an opportunity of witnessing a ceremony of Indian rites

as incorporated in the Roman Catholic religion of Mexico. I was impressed with the opinion that if Saint Paul could have beheld the barbarous show, he would have blushed for the name of the Christian religion; and I am astonished that in this enlightened day of the church, pious priests do not petition the Pope to purge the Catholic religion in Mexico of heathen and heretical doctrines and festivities.

At Calaya, myself and friend had added to our company three Spaniards of old Spain, who were most gentlemanly in their manners. Understanding that I neither spoke Spanish nor French, they used every effort to render themselves agreeable to me—and I would remark that, although individuals may not understand each other's tongue, yet the language of politeness is the same all over the world, and the numberless civilities that may be extended from one to another, are very congenial to the feelings of both.

Our first stage was from Calaya to Salamanca, where we took refreshments, my Spanish friends vieing with one another in attending to my wants. Salamanca is a manufacturing town, their cotton mills being propelled by animal power. The landlord of the Casa de la Diligencia amused me much by the antics he played with a piece of cotton cloth; he came running into the presence of the passengers with it, and, while my Mexican and Spanish friends were crowding around him to get a look at the cloth, he shoved them all aside, and with a triumphant air threw an end of the cotton goods on my knee, with the air of a factor or merchant. I examined the goods, and then looking the landlord in the face said, *bueno*, (good,) at which the old man clapped his hands, and patted my shoulders with rejoicings, until I was tired of it. However I felt desirous of knowing what such cotton cloth would bring at the factory, and I said to mine host, *quantum*, (how much;) he replied, *trece rial*, (thirty-seven and a half cents;) and I am confident that such goods could be imported into Mexico and retailed there at twelve and a half cents. So much for pro-

tection; and this too in a country every foot of which could grow cotton.

From Salamanca I passed Yrapoato, a town that excels the former in external appearance. My third day's travel was rendered more agreeable to me by the better condition of the ways, and the addition of companions. Not long after the hour of night, by the assistance of a torch-light, held by the waiter of the driver, the diligencia descended a long and steep hill, and having reached the bottom of a deep ravine, was brought to a halt before cross-bars that stopped the highway. These having been removed by a custom-house officer, we were permitted to pass up a long and toilsome gorge in the mountain, on the left hand side of which was a continued row of large buildings, haciendas beneficio mineral, (mineral factories,) for the grinding and smelting of silver and gold ores. In about an hour we were at the town of Guanajuato, which, although a place of much importance in Mexico, and containing a large population, I did not get a satisfactory view of, owing to the darkness of the night.

Dinner being over, for by that time I had learned that passengers on that route did not dine until night, my young Mexican friend, who had been remarkably polite and attentive to me during all of our journey, drew on his cloak, and pointing to my own for me to do likewise, he touched me on the shoulder as a sign to follow him. Without knowing what he intended I readily obeyed, and shortly afterwards we had entered the street, and were crossing the plaza. My companion in a gay manner said, "*Bueno notche*," "*Adios*," which I repeated after him, for in that manner he had diligently employed himself in endeavouring, during all our journey, to teach me the Spanish language; but, having called over the above words, he quickened his step, and leaving the plaza we entered a dark street. I must confess I felt confounded, in trying to understand what object he had in bringing me into a street which was totally unilluminated, at that hour of the night, for the words I had as cus-

tomary repeated after him, meant "good night," "adieu." I therefore thought it most singular that my Mexican friend should have taken me into the dark to take leave of me; unless there was some unknown mystery to accompany it, and I kept myself prepared to meet the worst.

Our direction was a crooked one, for we had already turned several corners. It was not long, however, before I was somewhat relieved of my apprehensions, by his saying again, for me to repeat, the words, "*Señor, Señorita, Señores*"—the word Senorita he caused me to repeat three times over, and then knocked loudly at a great door of a house before which we were standing. In about ten minutes' time a light was held out of an upper window, to the great joy of my friend, who exhibited much impatience; the light descended to the inner court, and a door large enough for a fortress was opened. I followed the young Mexican up a large flight of stone steps upon the corridor, from which we were conducted by a servant into a large and well-furnished drawing-room, and having seated ourselves my companion appeared delighted, and pointed to the elegantly polished, marble-coloured, painted floor, the silver chandelier and candlesticks, the silver ornamented chairs, the piano and guitar.

It was not long before the climax of his pleasure was complete, by the entering of a most graceful and lovely young lady. Upon her appearance we rose from our seats, and as she gently paused in the centre of the room my friend introduced me to her; what he said I know not, but I found use for the lessons I had received in the streets, and at the door, by saying, when bowing, "Bueno notche, Señorita."

After some conversation had passed, my friend turned to me, and in English, which I had taught him, inquiringly said, "Good?" at which I gave him to understand, "Esta bueno," (very good.) The young lady seemed pleased with the society of her friend, but I often detected her curiously

eyeing my own features and person; and from the gestures and declamations of the two, I could plainly percieve that much of their conversation was respecting myself.

To my agreeable entertainment, another young lady entered the apartment, to whom I was also introduced, and it was not long before a third appeared, and all having become seated and tranquillity restored, my friend turned again to me, and in his manner inquired if the ladies were "Good." To which he did not seem satisfied with my general assent to his interrogation, but wished me to particularize which was the best; and accordingly, thus understanding him, I rose from my chair, and crossing the room took my seat by one of the three, at the same time declining the Latin degrees of comparison, "*Bonus, major, maximus*," which appeared to divert and please the whole party. It was not long before the lovely selection I had made and myself were left alone, by the others retiring to the opposite side of the room; and thus singularly she entertained me by performing on the guitar, accompanying it with the soft music of her melodious voice, and by a game of backgammon. By the aid of my conversation book, which I found useful, she made many inquiries of me about my country, and discovering that she seemed to be much pleased with my imperfect answers, I asked her if she would like to visit the United States? to which she replied, "That she would be happy to do so, if she had an American for her protector." My stay at the hospitable house of the three lovely sisters was interrupted by my friend informing me that the hour had arrived for the departure of the diligencia, and we both, no doubt with much reluctance, took our affectionate leave of the accomplished and beautiful trio.

Upon our arrival at the hotel, we had only to take our seats, for the vehicle was making ready to depart. The diligencia, in leaving Guanajuato, had to descend again the same deep glen by which we had entered the town, as that was the only ingress and egress to and from the place.

Guanajuato is celebrated for its great productions of silver. The mines are more famed for the larger abundance of gold contained in the silver ores, than those of any other in the Republic.

When the precious metals were first discovered on the mountain of Guanajuato, the happy individual who was the proprietor, determined that a beneficent donation should be the first act to grace his good fortune. Accordingly he built a frigate of the first class, and when it was completed, armed, manned and rigged, he sent it to Spain, where he made it a present to the king: for this generosity his sovereign honoured him with the noble title of marquis.

The mines of Guanajuato are not now so extensively worked as in former times, and, in natural consequence, the yield is not so much as it has been; however, they are considered to produce, annually, about one million of dollars. They are believed, from the extent of their operations, to be as rich, and perhaps more so than any others in Mexico. But a short time before my arrival there, a system had been discovered by which a large amount of money had been robbed from the mint.

It appeared that, as I was informed, the government suspected that too much alloy was mixed with the pure metal, and it ordered that the coined dollars should be assayed. The result of a chemical experiment proved the conjecture correct, and by the watchfulness of the officers the thieves were detected. The plan by which the money had been abstracted was this: the individual, whose duty it was to examine the money as it received the stamp, would deposit in his own pocket a given number of dollars, the amount of which he would communicate to another workman, whose business it was to melt up such coin as had not received a good impression; thus the smelter would add to the silver in the crucible as many copper imitation dollars as the examiner had stolen, and by these means the bullion and the coin would not lose in weight.

My day's journey from Guanajuato promised to be a delightful one; for it proved that, as day dawned, as far as the eye could extend the road was good. During that day we passed several good-looking towns, and in particular that of Silao, a well-built place, containing about four thousand inhabitants. At Silao I noticed an extensive and elegant stone house, which looked as if it might have been a Jesuit building; and, from the use to which it was appropriated, I had no doubt of the correctness of my conjecture; for such edifices were occupied by soldiers as a garrison. The horses of the diligencia were exchanged here, and were better looking animals than any I had seen on the road. We passed on that day also the town of Leon, a place after the Spanish order, and of imposing appearance, having several large and very handsome churches. Here we took breakfast, and, while the driver was changing his team, I took a short stroll through the town, and was much pleased with the neatness and cleanliness of it.

It was after dark when I arrived at Lagos. This town, though situated on the largest river I had seen in Mexico, takes its name from being in a lake region. On the tops of the high hills, which are only the depressions of the mountains south of Lagos, are many lakes, one of which, an artificial one, I passed: it was two miles or more in extent. Lagos is in a warmer country than the valley through which I had just passed.

Much fatigued from the loss of sleep, and the exercise I experienced in my journey of four hundred miles, as soon as I had partaken of some dinner, and settled with my Mexican friend, who had been so politely paying my bills on the way, I retired to my room, and went to bed. Some might feel curious to know how myself and friend came to an understanding; and, for their information, I will say that, in the first place, I drew from my pocket a handful of dollars and small change, and laid it in a heap on the table at which we were sitting. He then called the name of the first place

at which we stopped, taking from my pile as much as he had payed for me there, and so on, naming each, until our arrival at Lagos. When he had finished, his amount of money was as large as my own. Before putting it in his purse, he looked inquiringly at me and said, "Good?" and obtaining my assent, "Esta bueno," and "*Mil gracias*,"—very good, I thank you a thousand times—he hid the cash for ever from my sight.

On the following morning I awoke and found myself entirely alone; for my Mexican friend had, during the night, taken the diligencia for Guadalajara. After dressing myself, my first business was to write in my journal, but I had not long been employed thus when I was interrupted by a servant-girl entering with chocolate, which is always taken in Mexico some hours before breakfast. After taking this beverage I determined to deliver a letter of business and introduction, which had been politely handed me by the keeper of the diligencia office in the city of Mexico, to be presented to the keeper of the same at Lagos. I was informed that I would find him to be a Frenchman, and that he could speak the English language. Upon my going to the office it so happened, that the first individual to whom I showed my letter was the gentleman to whom it was directed; but lo and behold! although he could parlez Francais, and *habla* the Spanish, as gaily as a mocking-bird, yet he could not say a word of English. I felt desperate, and endeavoured to get him to pronounce but one word of my mother-tongue; but upon every occasion he charged at me with both French and Spanish, to my entire discomfiture. It was a drawn battle, and we both recoiled backwards and took a good look at each other.

My surprise can hardly be imagined when I discovered my condition; and my confusion on that occasion can only be known to those who have been placed in a similar situation. I found myself in the very heart and centre of a foreign country, and in a town where I was a total stranger,

unable to speak a single sentence of the language of the people by whom I was surrounded. I shall for ever pity the individual who is so positioned that he cannot either understand or be understood, as I was in this instance, without an apparent remedy.

My letter to the Frenchman informed him that I would prefer to continue my journey to Zacatecas by the diligencia, if there should be any running to that place; and, if not, I would take a *caritalia*, a Spanish carriage, or servants and animals, as he might advise. In business transactions of the kind, where three points are to be discussed, of so much importance to me, it was necessary that there should be an explicit determination as to what should be done. I returned to my room for my book of dialogues, and hoped that by its aid each of us could come to an understanding; but, unfortunately, the book failed to answer my purpose. It was but a very imperfect compendium. I have no hesitation in saying, that it would have amused any person in the world to have witnessed our distress, in the fruitless efforts we made in looking for sentences to suit our purposes, and our endeavour to select and write down words to express our thoughts.

In despair the book was closed, and we were again put to the stand. In this dilemma a Mexican fortunately came into the room, and I soon perceived, from the brightened countenance of the Frenchman, that something pleasing was about to happen, and in a short time he beckoned me to follow him.

While passing through the streets, my mind confused by the disagreeable condition in which I was placed, I could only feel vexed at the unintentional attention I attracted from the inhabitants; and often did I hear repeated, as I walked, the names, *Ingles*, *Americano*. I had been advised to make myself as little conspicuous as possible, and to proceed hastily with my journey, so as to escape notice. I thought too of the declarations of many persons, with whom

I had formed an acquaintance in the city of Mexico, that no one had ever straight forward performed the journey I was making, unless at the head of an army, or connected with a powerful band of travellers: no one with whom I conversed but who discouraged and dissuaded me from my undertaking. And although my thoughts reverted to Old Virginia, there was yet no retreat left for me, and I was resolved to go on to death or to victory.

The Frenchman at length entered a large door way, and I followed him up the steps to the corridor. We were then met by a stout, likely looking Mexican, who was introduced to me as Doctor Tesus Anaya. The doctor could "speak English *leetle*," he said, by his having once visited New Orleans. I explained to him that I wished to take a caritalia to Zacatecas. The Frenchman assured me that my necessity should be supplied in two days' time, and although I was subject to so long a delay, I felt rejoiced that I was enabled to express the particulars of my wants. Having returned many thanks to the doctor for the trouble he had been put to on my account, I retired to my lodgings, determined to employ my time in writing in my journal.

I was engaged uninterruptedly in writing until evening, when my attention was aroused by the tread of many horses passing over the pavement, and stepping quick to the window, expecting to behold a military troop on its march; I perceived that it was only a large party of travellers. However, in a short time my attentive friend, the Frenchman, came running into my room, repeatedly saying Americana! Americana!—I immediately took my hat and accompanied mine host to the Mason, where the travellers had put up. Upon my approaching them they indeed proved to be a party of Americans, and seemed glad in that distant region, to meet with a fellow countryman. They consisted of twelve in number, of whom three were ladies, all from New England, and in the employment and under the protection of a Mr. Peck, who was on his way to San Blas, upon the

Pacific ocean, to establish a cotton manufactory. Thus it is perceived that the enterprising Yankee regards not space, clime, or tongue, so that he can indulge in his hope of making money, and I really was reminded of a St. Domingo politician's declaration, that if a bag of coffee should be hung in hell, a Yankee would go after it. Besides the Americans, there were eight Mexicans in the party.

Mr. Peck informed me that all of his company had been sick, on their way from Tampico to Lagos, being afflicted with intermittent and ague fevers; and notwithstanding that one of them had been left behind, yet he then considered them all in good health. Their indispositions were, no doubt, contracted while at Tampico, and on their way through the low lands of the gulf coast.

The sight of these American travellers would have been a scene of much curiosity, to any of the honest and peaceful citizens of the United States. They were all, men and women, bag and baggage, equipped precisely as the natives are, when on a journey from home. And indeed it is the only way that any one can hope to travel with any degree of comfort and safety. Each man was mounted on a good horse and Spanish saddle. Each saddle had holsters, and two good pistols in them, and to the left of each saddle was attached a long straight Toledo blade. Each rider carried a double barrelled gun before him, strapped to the horn of the saddle. The order in which the whole party moved was double file. The ladies were protected by being positioned in the centre of the line of their countrymen. When all were mounted and on their march, they had a singular appearance, being neither civil nor military, civilized nor savage, but in reality, partaking of something of all those aspects of mankind.

Mr. Peck informed me that he had anticipated some difficulty on his way to San Blas, as he had been informed at Tampico that Gen. Thompson had demanded his passport, and in fact had left the city of Mexico, in con-

sequence of the order of the government of Mexico, expelling American citizens from the Californias. But it afforded me much pleasure at the same time to communicate to Mr. Peck, that just six days previous, Gen. Thompson had assured me that there did not exist any difficulty between the two countries. I also had the happiness to say to Mr. Peck, and all of the party, that Gen. Thompson had favoured me with the reading of President Tyler's message to Congress, and it seemed to please them much, when I alluded to the strong terms in which Mr. Tyler handled the question of the barbarous war between Texas and Mexico. As for myself I am satisfied, that if the American people generally were convinced of the injustice done by Mexico to American citizens and American commerce, they would instantly make that country act justly and honestly in her ports, and towards American citizens, whose enterprise has induced them to enter the interior of that country.

I have heard it said, that the United States should blockade all the ports of Mexico, and shut her commerce out from the world. I am opposed to that, for it would be doing what Mexico would delight in; for if the trade of the world was cut off from her, her manufactories would then have it in their power to impose upon her people without measure. Mexico has but little to export, saving her silver and gold, and that she is desirous to retain; therefore she would be rejoiced if the United States would blockade her ports, so that the English companies could not export the products of their labour from the country. I am of the opinion, that whenever she undertakes to chastise her neighbour, she should send an army to the northern departments of Mexico, which would no sooner be done, than the whole north would throw itself under the protection of the United States, and petition to become admitted into the Union.

I was much pleased with all I saw at Lagos. The town being situated immediately on a river, there was no want of water. There are two mills here for the grinding of

wheat, the only ones I saw in any town in Mexico. They are of ancient structure and built of stone. The water was conducted to them by canals from the river, and fell upon tub wheels within the mills. From the abundance of water, vegetation flourishes at Lagos, and many fruits can be had at all seasons of the year at that place.

The people at Lagos appeared to delight more in the cultivation of gardens, than those of any town through which I had passed; and while their vegetables were abundant, they were more excellent than any others which I had tasted, more especially the article of lettuce, which was of large growth and very brittle, not partaking of the toughness and bitterness of that produced in the Union. The inhabitants seemed to be quite fond of this vegetable, as they made the principal portion of their meals of it; and I often noticed individuals with a bunch of lettuce in their hands, walking the streets, eating it as they went along.

The Mexicans are as fond of bathing in water as are the Spanish poodles. Mine host, the Frenchman, invited me to a walk with him, and whenever I was in sight of the river, or the canal of the mills, I could behold men, women and children floundering in the water; indeed, I passed near a woman who was sitting upon the side of the canal, whose head and shoulders, streaming with her long hair, looked like a sack of white wool, from the vast amount of soapsuds with which she was covered. Such are the scenes forever to be witnessed, wherever the traveller comes to water. Soap and water are the best and surest remedies in a hot climate for removing vermin and filth. During my walk with the Frenchman I admired much the extraordinary taste, exhibited by the people of that place, in attempting to give some gay appearance to the outside show of their houses.

The houses upon the street wall were painted precisely as were their rooms, by representations of vineyards, gardens, and landscape views, with flowers and varieties of

shrubbery, and for that climate the style was not, in my opinion, inappropriate; besides, the eye of the citizen was relieved from the otherwise dull and prison-like appearance of the houses. In no other town, during all my travels in Mexico, did I witness houses similarly painted.

On my return from walking, I found an American negro at the Casa de la Diligencia waiting to see me; he was the only black man I had beheld since my departure from Vera Cruz. He told me that his name was Simon, and that he was a native of Louisiana; this I had no doubt of, as his English was very broken, like that of a Frenchman. Simon said that an Italian had taught him how to *grind* the organ, and that he was travelling through Mexico with that instrument, at which business he would do well, were it not for the ladrones, who never failed to secure all of his profits.

Simon informed me that he had been detained at that place by sickness, and was under the care of S'r. Doct. Tesus Anaya. I inquired what the doctor prescribed for him, and he replied, that he was directed first to bathe seven times, and that afterwards he gave him some roots, of which he made teas to drink, but found himself no better: his cough was a violent one. And here I would remark, that to practice medicine in Mexico, the doctor, to be successful, must first minister to the superstition of his patient. Nothing is more common among the native physicians, when called to visit the sick, than to direct that the invalid should be bathed an odd number of times, (no matter how many, so that the number is odd,) previous to taking any medicine. The last and odd bath is supposed almost to produce the cure, which only requires the use of a little physic.

The physician has always to make good his fee before he commences the healing art, or otherwise he will receive nothing. The Mexican, on being confined by indisposition, hangs the picture of the angel Gabriel at the head of his bed, and during all the time of sickness, he is praying

to the saint. If he recovers, he attributes the cure to the direct interposition of Gabriel, and with much sanctity makes a present to the priest,—leaving the doctor unpaid, unless the wily physician has received his pay in advance. Doctors do not prosper well in Mexico, excepting in the large cities; first, because of the superstition of the people, and next, for the reason of the great good health of the table lands.

Simon was desirous that I should employ him as a servant, but not liking the cast of his physiognomy, and not wishing to be troubled with the music of his organ, as his speaking English was no inducement, I determined to decline the proposition. To convince me of his bravery, he showed his wounds received in hard-fought battles, and related the history of the murder of a party of Americans, to whom he was a servant; but these were also reasons why he would not suit me, for I did not know but that he might have been an accomplice in such horrid transactions, and as much of a robber as any of the Mexicans.

On the evening of the second day the diligencia was to arrive from the city of Mexico. I felt much gratified on its arriving at the office, at perceiving that the only passenger in it was either an European or an American; and much to my joy he afterwards proved to be a citizen of the United States, although for a long time a resident in Mexico. His name I must be excused from giving, as the reasons may hereafter prove obvious.

The American was good looking, and as intelligent a gentleman as I had ever met with. His journey was in the same direction as my own, at least as far as Zacatecas. I informed him of the arrangement made for me by the polite Frenchman at whose house we were, and proposed that he should share the accommodation. He gladly embraced the offer, and expressed much gratification at his good fortune of having it in his power to travel with a fellow-countryman.

CHAPTER XII.

Departure from Lagos. Chocolate, cups, knives and forks. An American for my companion. The new plain called La Villita. The polite Frenchmans. The plain of La Villita. Having arrived at La Villita. In towns in Mexico. Public houses called Mesons. Furniture. Spanish Caritalia. My misfortune. Hire a bed for the night. Fondi. Cook-shop. The rent of the room. La Villita. Departure. Roads, bridges and ways. Wheeled Vehicles. Ancient customs. The haciendas Pennueles. The extensive fields. An artificial lake. Arguas Calientas. Palace of the Conde Guadaloupe. We were foreign padres. Extravagant charges. Italian Opera company. The city of Arguas Calientas. Churches, priests, and soldiers. The case of the white Jack and the people. Decision of the Judge. American wagons. Pleasing sight. The difference between Mexican and American wagons. The Moors who invaded Spain. Our day's journey. Dust, wind. The skin. Display of badges. Our ride for the most of the day. Corn-field. At San Jacinto. The Indians. The body-guard. Garrisons of disciplined regulars. Conjectures of the people. Volunteers of the Army. Her Britanic Majesty conquering Mexico. Servants sleeping on the hard, cold pavement. The American servants. Remarks to the Secretary of American Legation. Hot sun. South-west winds. Dishonest and barbarous habits. The more polished circles. Swindlers, thieves and murderers. John Randolph. Gentlemen of character above suspicion.

On the morning of the 16th instant, the American and myself departed from Lagos. The carretilla in which we were seated, was obtained from a priest, upon the reasonable terms of sixty dollars for the journey. Our equipment consisted of one armed out-rider and a postillion, to the admiration of the good people of Lagos.

From the long residence of the American in Mexico, I was better provided to meet all the exigencies of my journey than I otherwise should have been; for although I had learned much, as to the inconveniences of travelling in Mexico, yet more I had to glean at every progress and each change I should make. My new friend had provided us with chocolate, cups, sweet bread, and spoons, with knives and forks, articles which never would have occurred to me to be necessary in my travels.

With an American for my companion, my ride promised to be a pleasing one. The day was warm, but tempered and rendered delightful by the winds continually blowing

fresh from the south-west. It was not long after we had commenced our journey, before we passed the pleasant valley of Lagos, by the difficult crossing of a mountain. The pleasing prospect of the new plain presented to our view La Villita.

But the chief luxury we enjoyed, was travelling over a smooth surface, mounted in state as we were in the priest's coach, attracting the attention of all the country folks as we journeyed along, for they knew the vehicle, and no doubt imagined that the holy father was seated within, and from this cause alone we had to attribute the marked attention shown to us on that day.

It was a device of mine host, the polite Frenchman, for he said that he could insure me my safety in the well known carretilla, for the Mexicans would sooner eat off their fingers than offer insult to their beloved and holy priest. The postillion and out-rider, too, the body-servants of the holy father, had their badges hanging in full view from around their necks, the sight of which not only held out pleasant hopes to the lookers-on, but at the same time, in the bountiful profusion of indulgences granted them, his favourites, the people had also to dread his anger and his denunciations, if good cause should demand them to be exercised.

I had good reason to congratulate myself likewise, that it was not my destiny on my journey, of perhaps half a dozen days, to Zacatecas, to be driven in a diligencia, under the lashing and stoning of the animals, over rough and smooth, all alike, amid the shouts of the drivers, and the barking of dogs.

The plain of La Villita was broad and long, more than a day's journey across. I did not pass any towns or water on my journey, but, as usual, had my attention chained by the peculiar scenery which Mexico always and every where presents—that of lofty mountains fencing in an Eden beneath.

Having arrived at La Villita, a town of about two thou-

sand inhabitants, we were obliged to put up there, for the reason that we should not be able to find houses at the close of the evening, beyond that place, to stop at. In having taken leave of all public ways of travelling, I found that I had also to adopt the modes of accommodation as practiced in Mexico, doing in Rome as Romans do—and the longer I travelled the more I had to learn, for that is the only way to get along in Mexico; as to make a stranger understand all your wants and necessities is a matter of impossibility. Hotels are not kept here as in the United States; in fact, agreeable to our understanding of tavern-keeping, there are no such things in the country.

In towns in Mexico, through which there is much travel, there are public houses called Mesons, which are nothing more nor less than the *caravansaries*, stopped at by travellers in Asia. Having selected, by inquiry, the best meson at La Villita, and chosen one of thirteen rooms in the establishment in the upper story, (for those of the ground floor apartments are chiefly occupied by arrieros and other filthy travellers,) our baggage was carried into it; and it did seem to me as if we were fitting up quarters for housekeeping for "life," as the room was entirely divested of all kinds of furniture, saving a large wooden table and a long bench. My friend being acquainted with the customs of the country, by his long residence in it, had brought with him from the city of Mexico his bed and bedding, called in Spanish *cartera*. This cot is so made for travelling purposes that it can be quickly put together, and soon taken to pieces. It weighed with all the bedding but fifty pounds, and was admirably adapted for the accommodation of the traveller, on account of its portableness.

It happened to have been my misfortune not to be possessed of a cartera, although I remembered being informed by a friend, in the city of Mexico, not to fail in supplying myself with one. But I deferred the purchase until I should reach Zacatecas, believing that I should find no difficulty in

obtaining a bed to sleep on, at any house that I might stop at, as I had always met with them at the Casas de la Diligencia.

My mistake was on this occasion very mortifying to me, for I then for the first time became sensible that I was to repose without the comforts of a bed, the luxury of which I had never before been deprived of; and as I cast my eyes over the dusty brick floor that promised to rest my weary limbs, my mind's eye could but review in retrospect the feather beds, clean sheets and white cotton counterpanes of old Virginia. In my dilemma, however, the American proposed that our postillion should go into the town and hire me a bed for the night.

The servant, after a long absence, returned and acquainted us that he was unsuccessful, and that the ladies of La Villita had informed him that they had use for their beds, and I could not obtain one unless I would take for life the owner with it. As flattering as the proposition was to me, to obtain in La Villita a companion, and as beautiful a one perhaps as the Mexican ladies were, yet in the distress of my fatigue, and in despair, I again directed the servant to make the second and last effort, and to say that I was willing for one night to pay double price for a bed, without the incumbrance. It was not long before the postillion returned with an excellent bed and linen sheets, with which, by the aid of my cloak to keep me warm, I had a comfortable night of it. My night's lodging cost me fifty cents, and as there was no *fondi* (cook-shop) attached to the meson, we had to despatch our servants to purchase of a baker our repast, at the rate of one dollar and twenty-five cents per meal. The rent of our room was sufficiently moderate, as the keeper only charged twenty-five cents.

La Villita is an ugly, cheerless-looking place, and there I was deprived of much sleep by the soldiers, from an old fort that overlooks the town, shouting and applauding some rope dancers near the meson. At eight o'clock the following

morning we repacked our baggage, and departed from La Villita. The road over which we travelled that day was equal to any that I had ever seen, and I doubt not that no country in the world could, with as little labour, have as good roads as Mexico.

The road over which we travelled had perhaps never been repaired since it was first marked out by the old Spaniards. It is true that bridges had been thrown across some rivers, and other inaccessible places, but the remainder of the roads have never been thrown up in form, excepting, as before remarked, for short distances, and near the large towns; and indeed there appears not to have been the necessity for that attention to roads in Mexico as in most other countries, as the table lands have no elevations that require excavations for thoroughfares through them, while the depressions of the mountains can be crossed without labour; besides, as it rains there from September until June, the earth is always in a parched condition during the rest of the year, so that the traveller never suffers but from dust or the heat of the sun, nor is retarded in his progress, excepting in the lake regions.

Another reason may be assigned why the Mexicans do not devote more attention to public improvements, which is, that they cannot be persuaded to believe that wheeled vehicles are safer and better modes of transportation, than by the packing of mules; they are like the boy who went to mill, with the corn in one end of the bag and a stone in the other to balance it, could assign no reason why he did so, other than that his ancestors did so before him.

About fifteen miles from La Villita, we stopped at the hacienda Peññueles, to take chocolate. From the high state of improvement in that place, I felt satisfied that it belonged to a gentleman of good taste. The dwelling in which he lived was commodious, and ornamentally painted on the outside; besides, all of the houses, necessary for his servants and other purposes, partook of the same degree of style.

They were erected in regular rows, and stuccoed, which gave a degree of finished freshness to the whole place, superior in point of completeness to any other hacienda that I had passed.

The extensive fields were inclosed by a stone wall four feet high, and discoverable, from the elevated position of the castle, for many miles in extent; and not only reaching to the mountain, but winding up its steep ascent beyond the power of human vision. There was an artificial lake near the house, formed by a stone dam of about one-quarter of a mile in length, across a shallow, though broad, ravine, the surface of whose waters was grateful to the eye of a weary traveller in that thirsty land. The proprietor of Peñiuelés was a wheat grower, as by the aid of the lake he could irrigate his lands.

Our journey was an uninterrupted one to Arguas Calientes, at which place we arrived late in the evening. This is a city that has seen more prosperous days, and was once the pride of the Spaniards. It does not now contain more than four thousand inhabitants; and, as an evidence of its decline, the meson at which we stopped was once the sumptuous palace of the Conde Guadaloupé—and a fine looking building it was—better than any I had seen in the upper country.

When we dismounted at the meson the wicked old postillion told the mob in the court, that we were foreign *padres*, (priests,) and with courteous smiles, and great reverence, did the ragged and motley crowd let us pass to our rooms, without our receiving a single *dun* for alms. After we had taken our quarters, and the servants had brought our baggage into them, all the operations had to be acted out, as were the evening before, at La Villita; that of setting up my friend's cartera, and of hiring myself a bed for the night, which I obtained for the extravagant charge of one dollar.

Our dinner was a most indifferent and unsatisfactory one for hungry appetites; yet the servant said that it was the

best he could procure for one dollar and fifty cents. It cost me, likewise, six-and-a-fourth cents to have my pocket inkstand filled; and so extravagant were the prices, for every thing, that it caused me to inquire if the people of that country were inimical to Americans? to which I was answered, that they were only friendly to those who had money; and I have no doubt that they would not hesitate much to the mode of filching it from the pockets of travellers.

The prefect of that city, I was told, was an enemy of the human species, by his having been a captain of banditti. However, I found some amends for all my hardships in Arguas Calientas; for at this place I found the Italian opera company of the city of Mexico, who were on a travelling excursion through the upper country. My friend and self spent a portion of the night in attending their delightful performances. I felt much regret that there were no printed bills for the accommodation of the audience, and for the want of these I was unable to learn the names of the actors.

The city of Arguas Calientas takes its name from the celebrated hot-springs that are in the vicinity of the place. These springs are said to vary in temperature from 80° to 120° Fahrenheit, and afford delightful baths. The invalids of the surrounding country resort in considerable numbers to the city for the benefits of the hot-baths, and, indeed, are never empty of men, women and children of the city, although they are not covered by houses, or shelter of any kind.

The city is as well built as any other of the Mexican towns, and has from one to two churches to every square; and, judging from the number of priests and soldiers I saw lounging about the streets, I have no hesitation in believing that a congregation of either could have been obtained at any time. In the centre of the plaza, in front of the meson, was a handsome fountain, built after the fashion of a monu-

ment. It was a solid pillar of stone, of about twenty feet in height, sitting upon a square basement of ten feet high, upon the corners of which were four swans in a sitting position, spouting water from their throats.

To give an idea how justice is administered in Mexico, and the influence of the wealthy over the administrators of the law, I cannot refrain from relating a case which came before the city prefect for his adjudication.

It appeared that a wealthy citizen was the owner of a white guaranon, (a jack,) and that, whenever the animal went to the fountain with his master's water-buckets, packed upon his back, as was the custom, to have them filled for the benefit of his owner, the naughty beast would, upon his arrival at the common watering-place, if he found there any poor women or children, who had also come with their earthen vessels for water, for the reason that they could not be the owners of such animals as himself, through mischief or pride, or some other cause, jump and kick all about until he would completely demolish all the crockery of the terri fied and defenceless sufferers. Such doings had long been complained of by the good citizens, but his master was rich, and it was thought useless to prefer a charge against the wealthy man, to the town authority, of the many breaches of the peace committed by the wicked creature.

It happened one day, however, that while Guaranon was on his way to the said fountain, and, as usual, all the good people were, at the sight of him, scampering with their frail jars from the watering-place, which was designed for the benefit of all the inhabitants, the said white beast, as it were, perceiving that he could not, by the retreat of the poor water-carriers, have a frolic, smashing jugs at the fountain, suddenly turned aside into a market-place, and, driving out all the buyers and sellers, he made his heels dance amongst the toy, dry-goods and glass-ware stands, as well as by overturning many pyramids of fruit and precious chili, committing grievous trespass. So great was the outrage

that the hucksters could not endure it; and, although his master was rich, they all determined, to the great joy of the water-carriers, to sue for damages. Accordingly, the owner was summoned to appear before the honourable prefect, judge of the law.

The master did not hesitate to appear, and when the charges were preferred, he, in defence, said, that the jack was a dumb brute, and that he could not hold himself responsible for his acts, and if the learned prefect wished to prosecute a suit for the benefit of the market-people, that he must send for the animal, the guilty one, and not for him, to answer to the allegations. He was accordingly discharged, and the guaranon duly summoned and brought into court, where it was thought, from his sense of guilt, he behaved decently. The judge, unable to obtain any defence from the dumb prisoner at the bar, and having sufficient evidence against him, proceeded to deliver the judgment of the court, and decided that the animal should have twenty lashes upon his bare back, and work at hard labour upon the public streets, for the term of three months.

Early on the following morning we again commenced our journey, and, having reached the suburbs of the city, I discovered ten American wagons encamped near the highway. Upon inquiry, I found that a majority of those wagons had American drivers, but the wagons and teams were the property of a Frenchman, residing in the department of Chihuahua, and that he had transported them from Saint Louis, Mo., by land, to Mexico, and I was told, that not unfrequently those wagons made trips from Chihuahua to the city of Mexico, a distance of one thousand miles. I was informed that they had made drives, from the above city, of more than two thousand miles, to Santa Fe.

It may be surprising to some persons, that I should have taken any notice of the wagon-train; but to an American, who was travelling far distant from his native land, in the midst of a people differing in language, usages, and, in fact,

in all their appearances, from the rest of the world, it could not be astonishing that my attention should have been attracted by any thing American, and that I should have been delighted in beholding a fellow-countryman, though a wagoner.

It may not be improper here to attempt to describe the difference between the American and the Mexican wagon. Without exception, the Mexican constructed wagon has but two wheels, and is manufactured, generally, without the use of iron. The hub is a single cut from a tree, about twenty-eight inches in length, and fifteen in diameter. There are but four spokes to a wheel, four inches through; while the felloes are twelve inches thick, and as many broad. The whole is made of the heavy, strong wood of the country, and, from its solidity, is difficult to break. The body of the wagon is about equally balanced over the axletree, the front resting upon the tongue, after the fashion of the ox-carts in the United States. The body is never planked, but thatched with straw, as also the sharp roof to it.

From eight to twelve oxen are at a time yoked by the horns, and not with a bow over the neck; while the driver carries a stout pole, from ten to fifteen feet in length, having a sharp metal spear affixed to the smaller end, by the cruel use of which they prick and goad the animals along. It is true, that there are some lighter wagons used in the cities, which have two sets of shafts, so that the whole weight of the body of the wagon rests upon the backs of the horses. However, as transportation is carried on the backs of mules, they have but little use for wagons in Mexico.

The individual who visits Mexico, from every thing that surrounds him, finds himself retrograding to the age of the Romans, in some things, while in others, to the days of Abraham. The Moors, who invaded Spain, brought nothing of improvement with them, and the Spaniards, who conquered Mexico, have indelibly stamped the character of the people of that country with a predominant prejudice against

all the useful arts. All of their implements of agriculture, and simple fixtures of raw hide harness, are of primeval invention, and the present Mexican seems to have degenerated from what their masters had perfected them in.

Our day's journey was a dusty one, for the wind set strong from the south-west, from which quarter it scarcely ever changes its direction during the dry season. As we were gradually ascending a more elevated table country from Lagos to Zacatecas, those strong winds, sweeping from the Pacific over the plains, have a disagreeable effect upon the traveller. For in the first place, it must be remembered, that we were at least seven or eight thousand feet above the level of the sea, and under the tropical sun, where rain had not moistened the earth for months, and then had a continual current of strong wind blowing upon us, its drying influences being felt according to my previous conceptions of its deleterious effects.

Los ira, as the Mexicans call it, (the air,) appeared to have absorbed the fluids of my eyes, and they had more or less distressed me, from the time of my first ascending upon the table land; besides my skin had entirely become divested of moisture, as if the liquids of the system had refused to perform their functions. The skin had a hard parched aspect, as if it was almost audible to the touch; while in the shade I was neither cold nor hot, and with not so pleasant a feeling as lukewarmness.

The dry earth, under all of these causes, was easily raised in clouds of dust, and as it floated in solid bodies, like a *sirocco*, or a whirlwind, we were obliged, with mouth and eyes shut, to charge through the thick array; but as exhausted nature would require respiration, it could not be performed, but by taking the dust with the atmosphere on the lungs. Well did I dread the *ira* as the Mexicans, although it has often been hooted at by some foreigners, who have had but a short residence in the country. We had not been long on our way that morning before I observed

that our out-rider had made a more considerable display of badges than at any former period, and upon inquiring the reason of the increased ostentation, he informed me, that as murders were very frequently committed on the road we had that day to travel, he wished the more strongly to impress the robbers, that he belonged to the coach of a *father;* and thus the man believed that religion could restrain the hand of a pirate, when the laws of his country would not.

Our road, for the most part of the day, was over a barren country, and I discovered that in many places of the plains, the blue thistle, or weed, that has in recent years covered the fields of some States in the Union, and in fact, supplanted, in many instances, the brown straw and other spontaneous vegetation,—abounded in that region, and as the American planter was at a loss to conjecture from whence the new invader came, may it not be reasonable to suppose that animals, brought through Texas to the United States, carried with them the seeds of the useless and barbarous growth.

In the evening we travelled by the side of a continued corn field, which extended some seven or eight miles. This I know is difficult for the inhabitants of the United States to believe, but is nevertheless true. With equal veracity it is stated, that the eye could not detect the breadth of the cultivated field, for it was lost in distance over the level plain. It was the hacienda of San Jacinto, and was the property of Conde Perez Galvez. Besides the maize grown on that farm, there were wheat and other crops. At San Jacinto terminated our journey for that day. My bed here cost me seventy-five cents, and indeed my sleeping was dearer to me than my eating; and but for the fact, that I should reach Zacatecas on the following day, I had determined that I would not repose at all, but employ my time it writing, and sleep in the day time, while travelling in the coach.

At the meson of San Jacinto many officers of the Mexican service had stopped, and among them was a Deputy

from the department of Santa Fe: his name has escaped me, but he stated that the Camanche Indians had made war upon the department of Chihuahua, and were destroying all before them. He related that he had had a distant view of Indians who were engaged in murdering all the inhabitants of a hacienda. He said it was calculated that the Indians had taken the lives of about three hundred thousand Mexicans in the last five years, and that hundreds of haciendas, which had not been devastated by the Indians, had been abandoned to the merciless foe by their proprietors. I was of the opinion, from the narration of the deputy, that the Texians, in some short period, would only have to subdue the savage conquerors of the northern departments, and people them with the Anglo Saxon race.

With the body-guard of the deputy, and the military officers who were quartered at the meson of San Jacinto, for that night, if they were brave, we could have resisted a considerable force of Indians. From the many cavalcades that were, from every direction of Mexico, making their way to the capitol, many were the speculations created by the good people of the country. Some were of the opinion that Santa Anna designed another revolution, with the object of making himself the absolute and permanent despot. Whilst others believed that the President was organizing a body of troops for the conquest of the United States. Their ignorance was to be pitied; the foreigners and the intelligent portion of the Mexicans felt satisfied that preparations were making for the invasion of Texas.

It appears to be necessary, for the maintenance of the government of Mexico, that every city, town, and farm should be strongly garrisoned with well armed and disciplined regulars. These troops, in my estimation, are not what they are represented to be by some, as having been taken from the prisons and hospitals of the country, which in some periods of the revolution, has been the case. But on the contrary, they are now likely, active young men, se-

lected from the athletic of the whole population of the republic.

My attention was attracted, while in the city of Mexico, by beholding some four or five hundred men march into the place, dressed in all the peculiar and tattered costumes of the country. A gentleman informed me that those men were volunteers for the army, and that they were obtained by a squad of soldiers, who marched through the villages and haciendas, capturing the best looking men of those places: and although the poor wretches would lament and remonstrate much at first, yet when they had received their uniforms and found themselves well provided for, they become pleased and delighted with their condition.

The soldiers of Mexico have been mostly impressed from among the aborigines, while the officers have had their appointments generally from among the Spanish race, and foreigners of every nation. If the people of Mexico are not military, they must become so, under the present military despotism, by which they are governed. And if Mexico should continue to be ruled by an ambitious chieftain, the United States may have a troublesome, strong and envious neighbour. It is not wisdom to despise an enemy until the breaches are repaired, and the fallen towers are rebuilt, for the garrison will thereby become refreshed and invigorated within, and, in an hour not expected, the self-secure may be surprised, and with a heavy loss, taught to turn their contempt into admiration, if not trembling.

On a certain occasion an officer of her Britannic majesty was in conversation with me, upon the subject of the efficiency of the Mexican army, and I could only be amused at the fluency of his imagination. The captain said that her royal highness, Queen Victoria, would not want an easier task than to subdue Mexico, for she would only have to send over some two or three thousand negroes from the West Indies, and after they had lassoed some one or two thousand Mexican Indians, and they found that they were

well fed, and clothed in the red coats of her majesty's troops —the balance of the Indians would soon come in, and there would be no battle to fight. However, I am of the opinion that, if her majesty's black troops were to come to Mexico, they would meet with the same gallant reception that the French did in 1839,—and that they would have to make the best of their escape, to prevent being lassoed in turn.

At the break of day, my American friend and self arose from our carteras to commence our journey, it being the 20th day of January. When I opened the door of our room it was with pain I perceived that our servants, (one of them was an old man,) were lying upon the hard and cold pavement of the court of the meson. The night was the coldest that I had felt since my arrival in the country, and I found that a close room, with several lays of light clothing, was necessary to make me comfortable. But having given expression to my sympathy, my friend informed me that it was the habit of all the servants of the country, and that in any of the climates of Mexico, the common classes preferred sleeping in the open air, to being lodged with the fleas in the houses, summer or winter. From the dryness of the atmosphere, no known diseases are said to have been engendered from the exposure. The American servants who have ever been used to summer and winter clothing, besides having blankets and fires in their rooms, could not, if transported to Mexico, stand what Americans call exposure, for the entirely different habits of the people of the United States from those of that country are such, that I have no doubt that persons of the hardiest constitutions would perish under the hardships. The Indian servants of Mexico have, by nature, no fears to apprehend from storms or change of climate. From the experience of those who have seen much of the world, it has been acceded, that the slaves of the south and west of the Union are better provided for, and are happier than the indigent servile communities of any other part of the world.

A Mexican gentleman once remarked to the Secretary of the American Legation, that he had visited New Orleans, and was very much pleased with the city, but that he could not bear to witness the sufferings of the poor slaves. The secretary appropriately replied, by inquiring, if he had ever compared the relative condition of the slaves of the United States with the servants of his own country? and if he had, his sympathy would be the more awakened by beholding the aggravated sufferings of servitude among his own blood and fellow-countrymen.

Since I have touched upon the subject of slavery, I will here take the privilege of saying that nothing, to my mind, can be more absurd, under the American constitution, than to attempt to break the bands of relationship between master and slave, without giving entire and perfect civil liberty to the disenthralled free men; for liberty, otherwise, to the black man, would be a mockery and a paradox. This sentiment I express in strict truth and justice to the subject—not that I desire either of the modes, or wish to meddle with the delicate institutions of my country.

Our journey for this day was as the preceding one; a hot sun, hard south-west wind prevailing, with clouds of dust, and often during the day the wind was more violent than I had known it to be on any former occasion, for I could at elevated points hear the gravel strike against the sides of the coach. The hard winds of this region are attributed to the higher elevation of that part of the country over any of the plains south of it. Zacatecas is to Mexico, what Mount Airy, in Virginia, is to the United States, for the waters, that have their rise at either of those places, flow to both oceans, east and west, and north and south, affording conclusive evidence that its summit is above any other portion of table lands in Mexico. It is said to be 8,500 feet above the level of the sea.

I felt rejoiced that my journey would terminate on that day in the Padre's coach: although it was with some ap-

prehensions that I should not be so fortunate again. However, we did not have a happy deliverance from all molestation, for about two o'clock in the evening, a party of men were discovered in pursuit of us, and, upon their overtaking the coach, armed with guns, swords and pistols, they advanced by dividing their party upon each side of us, three on one and two upon the other. They most impertinently scrutinized our persons and our baggage, yet without making the least hostile show. If they had, as undesirable as the necessity would have been, myself and friend were resolved to defend our lives and our property, and were well prepared for the rencontre. It was our intention that both of us should maintain the action upon our two sides at once with our six barreled pistols, flanked as we were with the enemy. Our escape, perhaps, from harm, resulted first from riding in the priest's coach, and next, by our being foreigners.

Such a condition of dishonest and barbarous habits, existing in a country called civilized and Christian, must appear to the nations of Christendom to be incredible, but the truth has nevertheless been attested by all travellers who have had the temerity to journey much in the territory of ill-fated Mexico. From the dreadful results of the attacks by freebooters, committed upon men and women, whose business has called them abroad, it would be madness in any individual to attempt a journey, without furnishing himself first with all the necessary equipments of defence.

The consequence of such an imperative custom is, that you cannot at any time see a miserable huckster driving a donkey, or a peasant engaged in his agricultural pursuits, without his having his gun and rusty old spear swinging to the side of his half-starved animal. I would impress upon the minds of my readers that there are no unarmed citizens in Mexico—it matters not when or where you find the man, in his house, in the street, or on the highway, although he

may be needy for food or raiment, yet you will see an implement of death in his hands, for the double purpose of attack and defence.

As a people, the more polished circles of society, as also the lower classes, possess decorum and finished manners, and in their guileless aspect, and professions of punctilious performances, the stranger, in the contemplation of the Mexicans, has much to admire—yet, at the same time, if his confidence should be won in them, he will often find himself the dupe of the basest treachery.

True, there should and must be some good, honest, and high-minded citizens in Mexico; yet, so difficult are they to be found, and so few the number known to the world, that they are not sufficient to give respectable character to society. It is a fact that perfection cannot be found anywhere, and some wicked persons are to be met with in every community; yet it is monstrous when the great majority of the inhabitants of a country are swindlers, thieves, and murderers, in an unqualified manner, as is the case in Mexico; it must be with shame and remorse that Christianity and civilization, in the enlightened world, are compelled to denounce them as a nation of pirates.

It is needless to garble the truth, for covering the iniquities of these people in any form, is but encouraging them in the perverseness of their ways, and deluding the credulity of those who are earnest seekers after information, some perhaps for future interested motives. Far be it from me to beguile a foreigner into the serious difficulties and dangers which must follow the travelling and residing of any one in Mexico.

Never could have I comprehended the correctness of Mr. Randolph's declaration, upon the floor of Congress, that, in Mexico, "the men were all rogues, and the women all ******," and have been impressed with the great error and responsibility of the government of the United States, when she received that country into the family of nations, until

chance and necsesity obliged me to visit Mexico, and when there I was compelled to believe ocular demonstration. I have the boldness fearlessly to charge home the disgrace of their national character, with the sincere desire that it may be but as a drop in the bucket, to chastise our sister republic into reform.

The government of Mexico, in 1842, made some efforts to break down the universal practice of wearing arms, by Santa Anna's issuing a decree that none, excepting gentlemen of character above suspicion, should be permitted licence to have private arms; yet the decree failed to correct the evil, for the good citizens all believed that they came up to the requirements of the law; besides, the keepers of the custom-houses would have been foiled in securing their fees had they enforced the intentions of the decree. Therefore the robber, as well as the honest man, alike, as formerly, carried weapons.

CHAPTER XIII.

Del Refugio. Flock of sheep. The hacienda Paras. Ascending the Plain. The Mexicans in the fields. Vein of silver on the surface. Abundance of silver ore. Laws of Mexico on Mining. The principal vein of silver. The appearance of the range of Mountains. A large Convent. High wall. Don Garcear's granary. Battle-ground. General Andrade Santa Anna. Colonel Harcourt's defeat of the Zacatecans. Santa Anna flushed with pride. Conquest of the United States and Texas. Napoleon of America. First view of Zacatecas. The streets. Meson. The American my interpreter. An Irish gentlemen. Many public buildings. La Parroquia Convento de Muestro Senora del Petroeenis. The Saint. Location of the resident Saint. Subject of divinity. Government Palace. Spanish Marquis. Child christened. The Mint of Zacatecas. Mr. John Scott. Mexican horse. Hacienda de Beneficio Santa Clement. Cultivated gardens. Water from the Mines. Bags of hides. Ropes of hide. Shafts of the Mines. The ore yards. Labourers. Captains. Specimens of silver ore. Native silver. Reflections. The eminence of Santa Clement. Mountain and Valley Scenery. Machine for pulverizing ore. One thousand bushels of ore. Washing the ore. Examinations of the labourers. Thefts. The blackleg.

During our day's journey we had to pass Del Refugio, a hacienda said to be of considerable value. I was informed that the present possessor is not its proper owner, but that, upon the demise of its proprietor, in *fee simple*, the creditors of the deceased disagreed about the sale of the estate, and the limb of the law who had been appointed curator of the property, having the possession, chose to retain it in defiance of the just claims of the creditors.

At Del Refugio I saw a herd of sheep that must have numbered several thousands, and, as they extended over the plain, they looked like a vast moving body of snow. I wish to impress the mind of the reader that, as the traveller advances north, and approaches one of these valuable estates, he will behold immense herds of stock of all kinds; and, as a test of the truth of my assertion, I will only cite the history of a hacienda which a few years ago caused some litigation in the city of London, England.

The haciendia Paras, signifying a vine, was the only estate in Mexico where the grape was permitted to be cultivated by the king of Spain. It was, previous to the revolution, the property of a Spanish nobleman, but after the in-

dependence of Mexico, he sold it to a Spanish house in the city of Mexico, and then it was resold to the house of Staples & Co., of the same city. The Barings, of London, afterwards became the purchasers, but were prevented from holding the property by the Deputies of Mexico passing a law preventing foreigners from buying or selling lands in that country; and it is said that the speculations of the Paras hacienda gave origin to the passage of the act. This estate, I was credibly informed, besides the extensive vineyards, producing many thousand gallons of wines and alcoholic liquors, possessed, when the Barings purchased it, upwards of three hundred thousand head of sheep, with a corresponding proportion of other stock.

As we gradually ascended the plain to the mountains of Zacatecas, we were exposed to a heavy cold wind, that swept over the face of the earth, unimpeded by forest. I was sometimes diverted by the Mexicans in the fields, whose loose serapis would, by the violence of the winds, float from their shoulders like the wings of so many *sopilotes*, buzzards, as if the natives would be flown away with.

At about three o'clock in the evening, my American companion pointed out to me the rich mountains of Zacatecas, in a deep gorge of which was built the city of the same name. The American had, during his residence in Mexico, been engaged in mining at that place, and could therefore, from his perfect acquaintance with it, minutely trace out, for my understanding, a vein of silver ore, the only instance of the kind known in the world, which rose to the surface of the plain, and with precision follow its ascent up the mountain, and describe the visible walls and buildings, where shafts had been sunk upon the vein and its branches.

I was much surprised when I perceived that the veins of silver ore were perceptible upon the surface, for I had imagined that the treasures of nature lay buried deep beneath mother earth and the mountain-rock, obscured from all anxious eyes, as does the rich man's money in his hidden

coffers. But not so with bountiful nature at Zacatecas, for she has, with the finger of her plentiful hand, plainly marked out the useful ore to the view of man, so that he cannot be foiled, or unrewarded in his labours in excavating the precious metals.

The laws of Mexico bountifully provide for the miners, as it is the privilege of any one to search for ores, and to work the veins when found, as his exclusive prerogative. When an individual has made a discovery of rich ore, it is his duty to survey a given number of acres of land, for the use and benefit of the mine, and have the same recorded in the office of the alcalde. He must then commence to work it in ten days' time, with a particular number of hands, and, at stated periods, increase his expenditures to an amount limited by law. The discoverer, failing to comply with the requisitions, forfeits all claim and title to the property, and may be ousted by the will of any other occupant who can punctiliously perform the demands of government. The proprietor of the land upon which the discovery has been made, is always pleased at the location of mining-operations upon his territories, for it brings to his doors a ready market for all the surplus of his hacienda campus. Being contented with the profits of his grain and stock sold to the operators of the mine, he has hazarded nothing in the uncertain results of opening and proving it: and besides, wherever a shaft is sunk, there is also a town erected, which likewise affords a speculation in lots, to the original proprietor of the soil.

The principal vein of silver ore at Zacatecas, which first shows itself in the plain, ascends the nearest mountain, and is discovered about midway, where a shaft has been sunk to a great depth, but is not now worked. The vein then descends over the side of the mountain, and, after crossing the next ravine, suddenly ascends to the top of the next cone-shaped peak, and so on, ascending and descending, until it dips under the city, and again rises to the top of a

high peak, immediately to the north, overlooking Zacatecas.

The appearances of the range of mountains, upon which are the veins of ore, are like all others in the interior of Mexico. They are almost deserted by vegetable growth of any kind; for the small amount of soil on those heights, generally, only produces a thorny, scrubby growth, that makes but a thin appearance in places. The silver mountains of Zacatecas, to my view, had something of a peculiar appearance, for they seemed to have been thrown up more abruptly, with a greater number of cones, having nipples crowning their summits. They seemed to have contained more of the native red rock of the country than any other mountain that I had beheld. I was informed that in mountains where silver was most prolific the rock chiefly abounded in porphyry, green and red stone.

But to return—as I approached the mountain a large convent was exposed to my view, which was a present to the order of Grey Friars by the owner of one of the mines. It was surrounded by the village of Guadaloupé, which had a romantic aspect, situated just at the foot of the mountain, commanding the pass, where I was directed the road to Zacatecas. Every town, of any consequence in Mexico, has its pueblo of Guadaloupé, erected in honour of the patron saint of the country.

Between the road and the village I perceived a high wall enclosing a large plot of ground, which I supposed to be a fortification; but my friend informed me it was a granary belonging to Señor Don Garciar. Such granaries were not common, but had been invented and built by him, to prevent insects from injuring his grain; his speculations in that article having been extensive; in one of which he is said to have made above a hundred thousand dollars by one purchase.

The plan he adopted to preserve grain for any given time, was to build houses within the enclosure, to cover the

corn, of round and cone-like form. The houses were about twenty feet in diameter at the base, but built to a point at the top. They resembled an old Virginia fodder-stack more than any thing else. When these houses are tightly stuccoed and filled with grain, the door is built up and plastered over, by which process the light, moisture and atmosphere are excluded, and the grain for ever preserved harmless from insects.

After passing the granary, my friend informed me that we had entered upon the battle-ground, where Santa Anna defeated the Zacatecans in 1833, who were the last troops to hold out against him, when he usurped the government from the constitutional president, Bustamente. The field was a dead level, and about one mile wide, confined between mountains. Previous to the advance of the conqueror, the governor of Zacatecas was desirous of obtaining some general of experience to command his forces, and in time Gen. Andrade, who had ever been an adherent of Santa Anna, suddenly became disaffected towards his former master, and espoused the cause of the Zacatecans. The unsuspecting governor, rejoiced at the fortunate accession, appointed him commander-in-chief of all his forces.

It was not long after Gen. Andrade had been acting under his appointment before he marched his army, consisting of about five thousand men, from behind the bulwarks which had been thrown up on each side of the mountains that commanded the pass to the city, and which, if defended, would have resisted any enemy that might march against it. But the general, true to his secret purpose, for there is honour among thieves, made his encampment on the plain between Guadaloupé and the granary, and his antagonist soon *bivouaced* in sight of him.

General Andrade, in a few days thereafter, commanded his horsemen, who constituted one-half of his army, to carry their horses to a distance from the camp, that they might have one night's good grazing, and also directed that the

artillery and infantry should not sleep on their arms that night, as he had no fears of Santa Anna attacking them. The whole army, fatigued with service, willingly obeyed the lenient orders of their general, with the exception of Col. Harcourt, a German by birth and education, who had the command of the Zacatecan artillery. He alone determined to be upon the alert, and, accordingly, before the dawn of day, Santa Anna had skirted the plain at the foot of the mountain, by which well-timed movement he had thrown himself to the rear of Gen. Andrade, and thus cut off the retreat of the Zacatecans from their strong-hold in the mountain.

No sooner had Santa Anna obtained this position, without having alarmed his fellow-countrymen and enemies, than he commenced a heavy fire upon them, and while all were in confusion at the surprise, the brave and watchful Col. Harcourt rallied his men and returned the volley of the enemy; and, could he have been sustained by the infantry, who were without horses, the triumphant Santa Anna must have been overthrown; for the colonel had driven him back, with the loss of three hundred killed and wounded on the field. As it was, however, he surrendered, with his whole army, to the power of superior numbers.

The inglorious commander of the achieved victory having secured his prisoners, issued a command that all foreigners, belonging to the Zacatecan army, should be shot on the spot. Be it also recorded, to the glory and honour of the Mexican officers, under the barbarous commander, that they remonstrated against the order, and saved the lives of many brave men. The shameful decree of Santa Anna being reversed, and the prisoners marched to the city of Mexico, the gallant Harcourt obtained his liberty, and in disgust retired to Texas, where he died a natural death, with glory and honour untarnished.

Santa Anna, flushed with pride at having obtained so important a victory, immediately determined, contrary to

the earnest solicitations of many of his advisers, to attempt the conquest of Texas, and, with a vanity far beyond his powers of execution, declared that he would not only retake Texas, but, with his army of ten thousand men, it was his intention to march to the city of Washington, and be the Napoleon of America. A gentleman of Zacatecas informed me that he was present, and heard the boasted vaunt of the American Napoleon, and so indelible had the glorious appellation been imprinted upon his mind, that he was again heard to make a similar expression to Gen. Houston, after the battle of San Jacinto.

From Zacatecas the victorious army was marched to the province of Texas, where the annals of history never before recorded so complete an overthrow of a general with well-trained troops. I do not accuse Santa Anna of a want of intelligence, but on the contrary believe him to possess respectable talents; for no man could at will usurp the government of a nation, without some strength of mind. By his superior intellect, and thorough knowledge of his countrymen, he has never failed, by the happening of events, to ride in the whirlwind and direct the storm, in the affairs of his imbecile government.

He cannot be commended for his ambition, which has impoverished the coffers of his country, and at the dear price of the blood of thousands of his fellow-countrymen. His passions are power and avarice, and to satiate his appetites, the one is maddened with the hope of gain, while the other is driven to desperation by the desire of supremacy. Mexico exhibits the remarkable anomaly of a ruler who holds the reins of government ostensibly—though not by the will of the people: yet, for all the sins of which he may have been guilty, the world will forgive him, if he will make his people honest and industrious, by doing which, he will emulate the character of, and be denominated by all the good of the earth, the great Czar, the Peter the Great of Mexico.

My first view of the city of Zacatecas was the most peculiar I ever had of any other place. My attention was first called to the scene, in perspective, through the narrow gorge of the mountains. The city contains about twenty-five thousand inhabitants. The streets are all well paved, and, from their being uneven and hilly, have a cleanly appearance. As the location of the town is over and surrounded by mines of silver, the wealthy proprietors have, in many instances, lavished their money upon large and highly finished buildings, after the fashion of the country. My American companion and self put up at De la Callede Tacuba Meson, and what rendered me well satisfied with the place was, that it was superintended by an Italian cook, who could speak English.

It was my intention to remain no longer in Zacatecas than I could make all my necessary arrangements for some future point in my long journey. My friend proving, to my mind, to be so very intelligent and well acquainted in Mexico, I did not hesitate to engage him as my interpreter and my assistant in business, as far as Caneles, and I was superinduced to close a contract with him, for the reason that he stated, that he was destined for that place. I therefore determined that, as perhaps I should not meet with another so fortunate an opportunity of employing an interpreter, I would not let the chance escape me.

The American promised promptness in securing all my equipments, and a speedy departure, and confiding in him, I employed my time in obtaining information and indulging in the pleasures of the city, besides resting from travel. An Irish gentleman I became acquainted with in the city of Mexico, and who had resided in that country for the last fifteen years, advised me, when I was about to depart for the upper departments, not to be thrown off a cautious guard by Europeans or Americans, any sooner than I would be by the natives; for that, in the general, they were all alike, and I would suffer by the one as soon as the other,—

yet it was absolutely necessary that I should have an interpreter, and a choice must be made, let it prove good, bad, or indifferent, and I abide the consequences.

There are many public buildings in Zacatecas, of large dimensions and costly workmanship. The church of La Parrogia is nearly the size of the great Cathedral of the city of Mexico. The entire front wall of the building is sculptured with the history of Christ and the apostles. On the church is a cupola built of the red stone of the country, which presents much architectural beauty; there is also another in an unfinished state. The edifice was originally designed for a cathedral, but as that intention was vetoed, it was never completed, as no house of worship can have two steeples, unless it is a Bishopric.

The Convento de Nuestro Señora del Patrocinio, has its situation upon a pinnacle of a mountain, overlooking the whole city. This convent is a small religious edifice, and the peculiar residence of the patron saint of the city. She however condescends to make an annual visit to her favourite people, and for the better purpose of investigating the affairs of the churches, puts up at each for the space of one week. After having taken her celestial round, and received the hospitality of the city; she then, in the same manner in which she descended, is marshalled back to her elevated home, followed by a large portion of saints and sinners, who as they move forward under triumphal arches of evergreens, have the blood red banner of the cross waved over them, amid the playing of music and the firing of rockets and cannon. Having taken adieu of her rejoicing flock, she remotely, though in sight, quietly resides on the top of the mountain, as the guardian angel of the public weal, there to remain until the following year, when the same anniversary festivity is to be celebrated.

There was no place of any consequence through which I passed, but what had its convent dedicated to the patron saint of the inhabitants. The location of the building is on

the highest elevation overlooking the town, and the resident saints make their annual visits to their chosen people in the manner above described.

There was one thing, however, that very much perplexed me, which was, to understand who were these divine personages, for every one had her separate name, and peculiarly partial superintendence of the souls of the inhabitants of each town, while, at the same time, they were undivided and indivisible, of the same person of the Holy Virgin Mary, Mother of Christ. I must confess that I am wanting in a sufficient knowledge of divinity to understand what seems to me to be an incongruity; and I have only mentioned the fact for the benefit of those who might better comprehend the subject than myself, or feel curious about an intricate subject of this nature.

There are many other churches in Zacatecas, yet I did not think it important to ascertain their number. There are several Jesuit buildings used as garrisons for soldiers. One of these, on the south side of the city, the bricks of which were made of the earth of a grave-yard; and where the walls had not been plastered, or had fallen down, the bones and ashes of the dead were all mixed up in the common mortar of the bricks. To satisfy myself whether this were so, I visited the house, and indeed there were, besides human bones, what apparently were fragments of clothing of all ages, visible on the walls, and, in the exhibition, I never was so forcibly reminded of the Latin maxim as then, "*Sic transit gloria mundi.*"

The government palace fronts on the south side of the Plaza, and is the largest of all the dwelling houses. It was originally built and owned by a Spanish nobleman, who, after the revolution, sold it to the city for the residence of the governor. I was informed that when the foundation of the church was laid, designed for a cathedral, it was to have fronted the plaza, but agreeable to that intention, the church would have obstructed the view of that place

from the palace of the nobleman, and to prevent its location there, the marquis made a donation of one hundred thousand dollars towards defraying the expenses of erecting the building, provided that the church should be so altered, as not to obstruct the view from the palace of the plaza.

During my stay at Zacatecas, it became necessary to make excavations in the plaza, for the laying of pipe to the water fountain, which caused the original foundations of the church to be exposed, and the citizens flocked to behold it. But the Mexicans must have remembered that the days of the marquis had passed away, and that, although the mines of the mountains are yielding millions, the people are poor, for there are no such men as the Spaniards amongst them. A Mexican gentleman informed me that the general condition of the citizens had never recovered from the plundering of the city in 1833, by Santa Anna, at which time he likewise confiscated the mining estate of one of her most wealthy inhabitants. But a day of retribution may come, and the author of so much calamity to his fellow-countrymen may yet be overwhelmed.* I was informed that this celebrated nobleman, (whose name I regret to have lost,) when he had his child christened, had bars of silver laid from his palace to the altar of the church of the convent of San Francisco, for the priest to walk upon.

At the mint of Zacatecas I met with Mr. John Scott, an Englishman, who, in his own country, had followed civil engineering, and had been sent out by an English mining company to that city, to investigate and improve the modes of mining, and the machinery for the coining of money. Mr. Scott and myself came in contact at Jalapa, and travelled from there to the city of Mexico; during his stay there, we messed at the same table. He was not only a

* Santa Anna, since the above was written, has been deposed, but time will have to develope his ultimate fate. It is the impression of myself that he will yet be again the Dictator of Mexico.

polished gentleman, but had also a spirit of accommodation, and seemed to take a pleasure in showing and explaining to me the utility of the machinery in the mint, and giving all other information occurring to his mind at the time, or answering my inquiries. The mint at Zacatecas is said to coin from five to eight millions of specie per annum.

The post-office and the custom-house are substantial buildings, well adapted for their purposes. There is but one college here, called the Zacatecas Literary Institute. It is not remarkable for its elegance or workmanship, yet it is sufficiently commodious to accommodate one hundred students.

On the 24th instant, I found myself mounted on a real Mexican small pacing-horse, completely equipped with all the paraphernalia of the style of the country, consisting of a Spanish saddle and bridle, the indispensable long rapier, holsters with pistols, and lasso. I am indebted to the obliging Englishman, Mr. Scott, for the kindness he extended towards me, in showing me through the mines of Saint Clemente and Saint Nicholas. The attention on his part was very acceptable, for these were the most productive of any others in complete operation at Zacatecas. The pleasure I enjoyed in visiting the fountain-heads of the wealth of the world, the glorious prospect before me, was divided in the anticipation of the first experiment I was about to make upon a Spanish saddle and a Mexican horse; and in truth, although to witness the disemboweling of tons of the precious metals, so dear to the pursuits and wants of mankind, was an opportunity I would have regretted not to have embraced, yet I must confess the prospect of the ride predominated; for at the one I only had to gape and wonder at the vast amount of silver belonging to others, while in the other I was actually to receive the benefit of a short jaunt upon the most delightful of all the going animals ever subjected to the dominion of human beings; and I was not disappointed when my friend invited me to depart, and we had entered the street, to mount what an Englishman calls his

"cattle," the gay, fiery, low-quartered, middling size Mexican horse, for they are all such in contrast with the American animal. My little steed pricked forward his ears, pawed the pavement, and shot at me his fiery eyes, as if he had mistaken me for a Texian; but I was soon in the saddle, and so far from finding him ill-natured, his whole action seemed to demonstrate the delight he took in holding me between heaven and earth, and, apparently discovering me to be a stranger, conformed to my ways upon the slightest notice. Upon my first acquaintance, and all my after use of the Mexican poney, I found him to possess remarkable instinctive faculties. A stranger to him is at first apt to mistake his native playfulness and sprightliness for the wild fright and ill-nature belonging to the English and American horses.

The Mexican horse is a descendant of the barbed animals brought from Spain. He is more hardy than any other horse in my knowledge; is obliged from his youth to maturity, to make his own living, and never knows what it is to be fed on the luxury of grain, until his master has thrown the lasso over his neck, and mounts his back, armed with a pair of Spanish spurs, the rowels of which are from three to six inches in diameter, and the first impressions he receives from under the tuition of his master, never fail to raise his feet above all impediment in the track before him, in an easy and nimble way, for he never stumbles. Our ride that evening was by no means over the plain, for no sooner than we had passed the precincts of the city, our direction lay immediately over a rugged and deep ravine of hard rock bottom, having a stream running down it, created by the water drawn out of the mines.

After having at a rapid rate travelled up a gorge for about one mile, we began to ascend the mountain, and then arrived at the Hacienda de Beneficio Mineral Santo Clemente. By the attachment of Mr. Scott to the Mint, we were accepted without delay at the gate, and having been first conducted to the office of the *administrador*, or gover-

nor, I was introduced to the officers of the mine, who were all Englishmen, one of whom conducted us to the shaft, which has two mouths one hundred yards deep. One of these was continually used, night and day, for drawing up ores in raw hide bags, holding about five hundred pounds each; while the other was worked in drawing up the water from the bottom of the mine. It astonished me to see the amount of water drawn up in this manner.

I was shown, on my way to Santa Clemente, a beautiful and highly cultivated garden, that received irrigation from the streams flowing from the mines, and was informed that so considerable was the quantity of water afforded by the mines of Friznillio, that it had changed the aspect of the face of the country, from thirst and barrenness, to that of blooming gardens, and extensive, highly-cultivated fields, by only receiving the quantity drawn from the shafts of the mines. Water is the only thing the lands of Mexico need, and whenever they receive it, the soil is covered with abundant harvests of grain, and all verdancy covers most luxuriantly the bosom of the earth.

Bags, made of new skins, are the most desirable for drawing up ore and water, for the reason that their own weight is comparatively nothing to what that of wooden ones would be, to answer a good purpose. Ropes, instead of chains, are use, also of raw hide, it being stronger than hemp or other fabric; they wind round a cylinder about twenty feet in diameter, propelled by the power of mules, as all the machinery of the mines and mint at Zacatecas is obliged to be, in consequence of the fact that the country about there, both mountain and plain, is so entirely divested of wood that, if all the gold and silver produced was expended, it could not purchase fuel sufficient to propel steam power; the only fuel used in that section of country being charcoal, brought from considerable distances.

I much admired the employment of ropes manufactured of hide in that dry climate, and I observed that all manner

of vehicles—the heavy road-wagons, or the rich man's coach—are draughted by them, in the place of traces made of heavy leather, or of iron chains; besides, they have the reputation of being more durable and stronger. The traveller is never annoyed by the clank and rattling of so much metal as belongs to the English and American carriages.

From the shafts we were conducted into the ore-yard, an area of between two and three hundred feet square. This large yard was covered with piles of silver ore, each containing about three bushels, and I suppose there were at that time more than one hundred of those heaps. The piles were made of fragments of ore, as broken by a sledge-hammer off the larger pieces, when drawn from the shafts. At each of these heaps a Mexican labourer was seated on the ground, engaged in severing the large lumps into smaller ones, and I was really entertained by beholding the dexterity and facility with which the labourer would perform his task, securing by sleight a large piece of ore between his feet, and, with both hands hold of the helve of his hammer, lay upon it, until the rock was shivered into fragments. These men, as they progressed with their work, were also employed in separating the rich from the poor ores, which, from their long practice, they were enabled, most rapidly to do. Besides the labourers, there were men of superior talent, called captains, whose duty it was to re-examine the minerals, and, with more scrutiny, to collect the greater from the lesser in value.

The gentleman who was conducting Mr. Scott and myself over the hacienda, called for the chief captain to select a variety of specimens from the piles, so that I might the better understand the nature and kind of the different ores The captain showed me a specimen of the iron pyrites, which one unacquainted with the ore, would imagine to be the most valuable of any of the lumps contained in the piles; for, as the beholder perceives the large veins of gray

bright metal running through the rock, he is apt to mistake the sulphate of iron for the genuine silver. But, agreeable to the old adage, that "all that shines is not silver," so it is with the iron pyrites—for notwithstanding the specimen dazzles the eye by its superior glittering appearance, yet it contains less of the precious metal than any other specimens to be found. The sulphate of iron pyrites is often mistaken by the ignorant for gold. There were also some iron pyrites containing sulphurate of silver. Specimens of this kind are very brilliant and rich in appearance, and indeed contain more silver than the simple iron pyrites.

The captain after a long search found a specimen of native silver, united with iron pyrites and sulphate of silver. This specimen was not only rich, but lovely to behold—for the native silver seemed to have blossomed in the shape of a rose, and ornamented itself with slight tendrils winding and curling most brightly and purely over the rich silvery resemblance of the flower; it looked to me more like the delicate art of the silversmith, than the work of nature. Another specimen of iron pyrites contained silver in a state of sulphurate. It had a beautiful aspect, looking as if it were a bright lump of silver unmixed, and was more valuable still than the simple iron pyrites, or those which contained sulphate of silver.

The captain then exhibited the native silver, attached not to reir stone, but to the rock peculiar to that country, for all of this valuable metal was pure, unalloyed silver. It existed in small wiry particles protruding out of the curling veins, or otherwise appeared to have blossomed out at once in bunches. The silver of one of these specimens had something of a yellowish tinge, which caused me to inquire if the silver of that mine contained gold, when I was informed that the proportion was so small that it was considered by the company not to be worth the separation. These specimens were contained in what the officer called slate-rock; but a gentleman, more scientific, told me that the

proper appellation of it was green stone, the abundance of which covered the mountain in many places.

To conclude my description of the ores which I saw at the Hacienda Beneficio Mineral Santa Clement, I must say, that under the burning Mexican sun I had never before witnessed a more lively and desirable scene, or one more capable of producing a variety of pleasing reflections. To look down into the bowels of the earth, from whence issued deep, sonorous explosions of powder, followed by the distant hoarse, crashing, crushing sounds of the falling rocks, and then raise my head, and cast my eyes around me, and behold the apparent wasteful profusion of nature's wealth, made me ask myself—Why are there any suffering poor in the world? and my soul responded—Treasure up not the corruptible things of this earth, for the bliss of the happy cannot be purchased by silver and gold; but there is an all-perfect store, which, if secured in the high coffers of heaven, moth can never corrupt, nor thieves break through and steal; and all the riches I then beheld would, but for a few years only, serve to stimulate the appetites of the miner, the overreaching, the vicious and the robber; and it is therefore, not only vanity, but ruinous to the true interests of the virtuous, to envy the possession of that which was only transitory, and can never satisfy; but it was calculated to expand the hopes of never-satiated desires, which were in their very nature perishable.

From the high eminence of Santa Clemente, I could look down upon the mountain-side, and the narrow valley beneath, without seeing a foot of soil in cultivation, excepting the green garden which I have mentioned, as watered by a silvery tide, flowing from a natural fountain of precious metal. And at thus beholding the vast expanse of the waste of the face of the earth, I could but reflect how much more valuable to animal creation would have been the amount of industry, expended in the mines, if it could have been applied to the neglected and fertile soil of the country.

From the ore-yard we were conducted to a new machine for pulverizing the mineral. This fixture was propelled by water-power, and was supplied by a stream from the buckets that were hoisted up from the shaft. It looked to be precisely like all the powder-mills I have seen in the Union. There was, at a convenient distance, a pile of poor ore, which, I was informed, contained about one thousand bushels, and the machine was continually kept in motion, crushing from that bank. As the dust passed from under the crushers, it found its way to a long trough, through which flowed a constant stream of water, by which process the particles of metal sink to the bottom, and there remain, while at the same time the water flowed on, dusting its bed with silver as it descended the mountain.

After we had been satisfied with all we examined, and were about to depart from the mine, I perceived a superintendent in a room near the large gate at the entry, running his hands through the hair of the heads, while his fingers passed in and around the ears of the workmen who came to him for examination. At the first sight I thought I was about to be ushered into the presence of some learned doctor of phrenology, but I was soon undeceived by observing that no sooner had one fellow's head been examined than he doffed his serapi, showing the buff, and suffered himself to be searched all over, even to the bottom of his sandals, (for shoes are not allowed to be worn in the mines,) and not unfrequently bumps of secretiveness were found, which were always extracted, and never failed to be the richest native silver.

The workmen, having undergone the scrutiny of the officer in the room as above described, was then dismissed, and, as he arrived at the gate, he there found another officer, standing on a mat, who also gave him a minute search, which, when finished, the man was suffered to make his exit from within the walls of the mine. The officers who performed the task, when it was over, approached the English

gentleman, who had attended us, and handed him the spoils taken in the search, and each of them had a handful of silver. I inquired how thefts in the mines were punished, and was informed that this treatment was not practised, for, that if it was, the company could not obtain hands to perform the labour, as the Mexicans do not consider it robbery to take ore. It is therefore the look-out of the officers to detect secretions of silver or gold, this being precisely the same principle adopted by the blackleg, that, as it is his business to cheat, it is that of the individual who plays with him to take care that he is not defrauded.

From Zacatecas I had an opportunity of writing, by a private conveyance, to my friends in Virginia, as Mr. Clement, an Englishman, who had been governor of a mining-company was going to give up his employment and take up his residence in the United States. Mr. C. had been prosperous, and was unwilling to educate his family in Mexico. Wherever he may reside he will make a most worthy citizen.

CHAPTER XIV.

Zacatecas. Cargo animals and carters. Much disappointment. The hotel. Meson de la Calle de Tacuba. Confined atmosphere. Fire-places and stoves. Ice-creams. Ice-makers. Objections to the meson. Poor fare. Mules. Fleas. Mexicans do not kill fleas. New home, No. 43. English and American citizens. John Bull. Minor nobles. Merit. Love of country. Americans Mexicanised. Lion and the unicorn. Society of Zacatecas. Party of Americans. Indian news. Bold resolve. Narrow streets. Buried money. Romance of buried silver. Catholic country. Telling of bells. My servant. Region of day. Mexican mesons. Mexicans do not dine altogether. Spanish gentleman. Conversation. Mexican lands. Unmasked myself. U. S. and Mexico. California. Oppression of Americans. Justice of my conclusions. From the position of Zacatecas. Mexico a country of great extent. Solicitude of Gen. Thompson. Pleased with the face of the country. Alle-made of Zacatecas. Monument to Signor Don Francisco Gareerace. Dr. Jenkins. Prisoners. Public improvements in Mexico. Punishment of crime. Penitentiary system. Possession of the host. Prostration of the people. A friar and his sheep. Burial of the dead. Nephew of Col. Wilcox. System of the Mexican government. Iron of Zacatecas. Revenue of the country. Ward the dictator. Want of fuel. U. S. and Mexican manufactures. Competition.

On the 26th inst., it being the sixth day after my arrival at Zacatecas, my interpreter informed me that it was impossible for him to make all the arrangements for my journey that I required of him under ten days time. He said that there were no cargo-animals for sale in the city, and I would be obliged to hire my transportation from thence to Caneles, and it would require one more week to finish the travelling cartera, which he had been making for me, and also that he found much difficulty in obtaining such servants as he could confide in.

I was much disappointed with the above intelligence, for it was my ardent desire to proceed on my long journey as hastily as possible, and it was a very uncomfortable reflection for me to have to hire my animals to Caneles, a distance of about one thousand miles. This would appear, to any person, to be as costly, if not more so, than to purchase the animals in the first instance; but, as the American had been a long resident in Zacatecas, and moreover had won my confidence by his gentlemanly deportment, I did not hesitate to believe him.

The Meson de la Calle de Tacuba had been a source of much annoyance to me; it was a one-storied building, having a court of a hundred feet square: the rooms were without any kind of windows; the simple ground-floors were cold; and when the doors were for any length of time closed, the atmosphere within had a confined and earthy smell, which always produced in me a suffocating sensation.

I never once beheld the comforts of a fire-place or a stove in all Mexico, and in Zacatecas, though it was neither hot nor cold, it was unpleasant to a northerner not to have a fire sometimes, to break the perpetual chill, and produce a glow on the surface. I had not seen a fire since I left the steamer James Madison at New Orleans.

As I have again alluded to the climate of Zacatecas, I will relate the fact of my hearing a huckster calling ice-cream for sale in the streets. At a loss to imagine how ice could be obtained there, as the place was too far from Orizava to have it transported thence, I inquired, and was informed that during the month of January, in the cold, deep glens of the mountains, where the rays of sun least penetrated, the ice-makers, for they are so called, place large earthen vessels, of about the size and shape of an English tea-board, with a shallow amount of water in them, and, as a sheet of ice forms upon the surface, it is carefully skimmed off, and deposited in bulks for preservation. And thus a supply of ice was furnished for a short period in the year to afford a luxury for the inhabitants of that city.

My objections to the Meson de la Calle de Tacuba were also increased by the quantity of travelling past that place, and the rattling and tramping of the hoofs of the mules on the pavement, which was an annoyance intolerable to me. It must appear evident that, to an individual who had been used to better accommodations, it must have been a hardship to be obliged to put up with such poor fare, besides the inconveniences and want of comforts.

But such are the customs of the country, and individuals who have seen better days are bound to suffer; and incredible as it may seem to some, without in the least detracting from the Mexican meson entertainment—for nothing has been said of the eternal warfare the much to be pitied and fatigued traveller has to wage against the fleas; the houses are filled with these vermin, who do not hesitate, upon your entering into their apartments, to form an intimate acquaintance with you, skin deep; and indeed I have had them so remarkably social and fond of me, that they were hopping and skipping about upon my journal, while I have been taking my notes. The common Mexicans do not on any occasion destroy these insects, for they say, as Uncle Toby did of the fly, that the world is big enough for them and the fleas too.

My interpreter, to reconcile me to my long delay at Zacatecas, rented rooms at a reasonable rate, each of which had a window, as well as a door to them, and having also a location upon the street and exposed to the sun. This I turned to an advantage, for whenever I found the shade too cool I had an easy refuge to the sunshine. Having become settled in our new home, No. 43 Calle de Aroiba—that is, the upper street—I determined to employ myself by walking the streets. As it was impossible for me to enjoy the society of the Spaniards or Mexicans, with any degree of pleasure, both for the want of acquaintance and my deficiency in their language, for the Spanish cannot be learned in a day, I satisfied myself by the delight I had in looking at the ladies as I passed along, and in turn being stared at as a stranger.

However, I did not find myself altogether without society, for there were many English here, and some Americans, to whom I was soon introduced. I always perceived that, wherever I met with foreigners, some peculiarities attached to them, and more especially as it regards the English and the Americans.

In the first place, John Bull invariably denominated himself *primo,* and never failed to swagger and play the aristocrat more than others, and if he was only a clerk at a hacienda beneficio, his deportment was more consequential and ostentatious among the republicans of Mexico, than even that of the Minister Plenipotentiary was at the capital. His pride always seems to consist in rendering himself as much as possible foreign to the people he resides among; and to one acquainted with English manners and customs, it was somewhat diverting to behold those minor nobles, with Spanish *mustache* and antiquated European dress, something French, and part English, stiffly holding themselves up as models of elegance and *debonair* of manners; it never fails to remind me of the pithy saying of "like master, like man," examples of which are often seen among the slaves of the south, in the United States. Their conversation is always interesting, by being flavoured with declarations of their relationship with my Lord Dowdy, or some Earl, or Baron—while their brothers or cousins are always better to do in the world than themselves, either being officers in the British army or navy.

The English are the most powerful people on earth, and I am glad that the inhabitants of the United States, and particularly those of the Old Dominion, are descendants from them; but I am also rejoiced that the minds of my countrymen are elevated above that sycophancy which knows no merit, saving a name derived from those who never knew, or would deign to look upon them. I admire the love of country that dwells in the bosoms of Englishmen, and would to God that the hearts of all Americans were as true to the sacred principles of their constitutional liberty, as the English are to the Queen of Britain's isle. I must also add that in some instances I met with Americans who had become Mexicanised, who appeared to value more the lion and the unicorn, than the stars and stripes; and my interpreter being one of these, I had to remind him of his good whig pa-

rentage. It was nevertheless a comfort to me to meet with Americans or Englishmen, who could speak my mother tongue, for no one can imagine the unpleasantness, without experiencing the condition of having to travel in a foreign country, the language of whose people he cannot understand; for he then recounts his countrymen and friends, with whom he once so familiarly conversed, in the same manner as a person labouring under a burning fever is reminded of the cooling fountains from whence he has satisfied his thirst.

However the society at Zacatecas was good, and very agreeable. Among its number were two English physicians, who were very intelligent and polite gentlemen, but their professional services were said to be little wanted in that city, saving for casualties, as it was very healthy, being represented to be more so than perhaps any other city or country. It happened that, upon the day of my removal to No. 43, a party of three Americans arrived at Zacatecas, from the northern provinces, and confirmed the previous news, that the Camanches were making incursions upon the upper departments, killing and plundering the inhabitants to a considerable extent.

The Indians have on several occasions descended as far as between the cities of Zacatecas and Durango, on the very track that I should have to travel, and that too without resistance, for the reason that Santa Anna had withdrawn all the troops from the frontiers, to sustain himself in power at home, and to make the Northern provinces a wilderness, inhabited alone by barbarous Indians, to prevent Mexicans from making settlements, and thus cut off the emigration of foreigners to those regions; as also to seal more effectually the order prohibiting the residence of Americans in the Californias; and, therefore, if I should be so fortunate as to escape a cruel murder by the lawless Mexicans who infest the highways, I could have no good reason to anticipate protection from the merciless Camanche Indians.

But since I had commenced the hazardous undertaking, notwithstanding the difficulties and dangers that my enterprise was obliged to encounter, and as there was no retreat for me, unless I should be reckless of being covered with the shame of cowardice, I, upon every examination of myself, boldly resolved that I would perish, or else overcome every obstacle, and make good my residence at the far-distant port of San Francisco, where I would conceive it to be the best deed of my life to protect the commerce and the citizens of the United States.

The streets of Zacatecas are narrow, crooked and singular, owing to the city being confined by mountains. I could not at any time have an extensive view of any street, and for this reason it required that I should exercise myself the more by walking, so that I might see every thing desirable, and form an opinion as to what contrast Zacatecas bore to other towns that I had seen.

In my rambles here I was shown a mountain along the sides of which the old road ran, where it is said a large amount of money had been buried by a band of robbers, who long since infested Zacatecas; but as the banditti had been suddenly cut off, without leaving any one of them to divulge the secret where the treasure had been deposited, the present inhabitants had from time to time failed, in fruitless researches, and expenditure of large capital, in securing it. Many are the excavations made by the credulous yet visible, in the forlorn hope of finding perhaps that which had never been secreted.

There is no country in the world, and especially among superstitious nations, but where there exist some romances of buried silver and gold. Doubtless the above legend was gotten up to excite the wonder of the curious, and encourage the ignorant to hunt for that which never had an existence, with the hope that they might be so fortunate as to discover a new vein of silver, nature's hidden treasure.

My visit to Mexico, being the first time I had ever been

in a Catholic country, it was with some surprise that, wherever I went, the ringing of the church-bells predominantly attracted my attention—and not until I reached Zacatecas, did I come to an understanding of the different ringings and tollings. I had hoped that, when I left the city of Mexico, my slumbers and meditations would not again have been disturbed by having to listen to the unusual and hourly tolling of bells; but, upon my arrival at Zacatecas, it being the only town of any consequence I had stopped at for some days, I was obliged every half hour to put my finger to my ears, and shout out to my servant to know "*Si la diablo á Santa Anna habia arribáge,*"—If the devil or Santa Anna had arrived—which appeared to divert my man very much, when he would, with all the devotedness of religious feelings, to the great amusement of my interpreter, commence an explanation of the different sounds. Sometimes they were for mass—for the Mexicans receive this every morning at eight o'clock; and I have seen, on such occasions, the churches so much crowded, that many would be kneeling in front and around the building, catching, in the most profound reverence, every low tone of the organ, as well as the solemn voice of the distant officiating priest within. Sometimes the tolling was for the souls of some deceased rich person; for none but those who can pay, receive that honour. To an individual seated in his room, the slow and deep tones of the bells seem to be answered from cupola to belfry, as if each felt the distressing pang of death, until the distant echoings of the mournful sound would die away upon the ear, producing a sadness of feeling in the listener, while he could imagine that he beheld the first heavings of the bosom of the deceased, in the agonies of death, until the last breath had flown, and the pulse had ceased to vibrate, and all was over.

Notwithstanding there was a ceaseless ding-dong uproar going on; yet the most troublesome of all, at the same time I will confess it was sometimes a pleasure, was the an-

nouncing the approach of the meridian of day. The inhabitants are warned, for thirty minutes before the hour of twelve, that the king of day was about to be poised just above them, by the bells, of most indifferent tones, wishing to ring, being irregularly struck by a wooden hammer, which produced smothered, distressing sounds, as if to give an alarm, but were half way prevented by not having full power of speech. At length, however, the blows would become more regular, and were answered by a distant bell, more audible, and yet another, and another, until a climax approached, when all the brass in the place seemed to be crushing to pieces—and precisely at the moment of meridian time, the brain is pained by the confused noise, as if the world was summoned to judgment: then there is a sudden relief, produced by the big tom of the principal church giving, in deep sonorous tones, three taps, when all the bells are silent, as if called to order by the voice of majesty. Then is heard the time of day, the peal of 12 o'clock, during which the inhabitants will stand uncovered. The bells alone do not proclaim the advance of day, for the band of the garrison is ready, when the last stroke of twelve is sounded, to rejoice, with musical strains, in the march of diurnal time; after this there is a slight frolic among the bells, and the noise ceases. The rising and going down of the sun is likewise celebrated, which they call the *oration*.

In Mexican mesons the boarders do not dine together, but each one sends his servant for his meals, or goes himself into the public room of the fonda at any hour he chooses, and is there furnished with as many dishes as he may like to call for: and although there may be others dining at the same time, it is not one common mess where all are fed from the same dish, but each one has his peculiar dish, unmolested by any others. Happening to dine one day in this manner, I fell in company with an old Spanish gentleman who could speak English, and we had not been long in the room before we exchanged looks, when he inquired of me

if I came by the way of the United States. I replied that I embarked at New Orleans for Vera Cruz. He said his residence was far from the Atlantic coast, and that it had been a long time since he received any intelligence from Europe or the United States. Having satisfied his inquiries as to the English Union Jack affair, he then wished me to tell him what was the tone of feeling of the people of the Union towards Mexico, and if the government did not wish to make war upon that country, saying, that he had understood that the American Congress was desirous of obtaining the Mexican lands, so that they might increase the revenues of the treasury.

Having heard the statements of the old gentleman, I did not hesitate to unmask myself, and informed him that I was a native of the United States, and not, as he supposed, an Englishman; and that I was from one of the middle States. I told him that the people of the Union sympathised with their republican brethren of Mexico, and rejoiced with them whenever they made an advance in liberal principles, for Americans not only loved civil liberty and justice at home, but admired the people of any clime who have followed the glorious examples of love of freedom and independence, which a Washington inspired his countrymen with; and that the people, as well as the government of America, could have no other feelings for Mexico, than those of kindness, notwithstanding passed wrongs, in respect for the weakness and revolutionary condition of her neighbour; and that the United States chose rather to pity than to crush her; that the policy of the United States had never been that of conquest, and that she would sooner submit to some ills, than heap heavier calamities upon others; and therefore Mexico had nothing to fear from the ambition of the United States, so long as she did not infringe upon the laws of nations, or break existing treaties.

I related to him that Mexico had never had cause to make a complaint or ask an indemnity of the Union, but

that, on the contrary, my government had to suffer delayed negotiation with her, for remuneration for the many spoliations committed by the Mexican authorities upon the commerce and the private property of citizens of the United States, all of which our people had endured, and no disposition was shown on the part of our government to retaliate by declaration of war, in consideration of which kindness, the Dictator and his Minister of War and Marine had issued a decree expelling Americans from three Departments and the Californias, without any known cause, or their having been suspected of molesting the peace of society.

I could but add that unbounded pity and mercy were alone the attributes of the deity, and that the government of the United States, agreeable to the dictates of human reason, would have a stopping point for her lenity in enduring accumulating insults, injuries and wrongs, which would have to be atoned for; and if the people of Mexico did not look to the misrule of their usurpers, the Union would have to take into consideration what course to adopt by which she might live in reciprocity of good respect with her sister republic: and that whatever her exasperated citizens may have done, the government has never encouraged a spirit of ill will in the minds of its people against the inhabitants of any country: it deals not in invective or threats, but rather attempts to persuade and entreat others to act justly, and in the timely moment its angry war-spirited eye is more to be feared than disregarded. Texas was then free and independent, and if in future time she should wish to hover under the wing of the American Eagle, it would be labour lost, on the part of Mexico, to make objections.

The old Spaniard seemed to admit the justice of my conclusions, and replied that he was pleased to be informed, that the American people were not disposed to make war upon Mexico, for the purpose of taking away the land from individual owners, and that for himself, notwithstanding the citizens of the Union, to his own knowledge, had often suffered, he was of the opinion that there was every good rea-

son for the two republics to live in harmony, if it was not for the demagogues and aspirants to power in Mexico, who had not only distracted their own people, but were continually breaking treaties formed with other powers, or else, in their recklessness, insulting nations with perfect wantonness. He said also, that he hoped their deeds would not be attributed to the Mexicans as a people, but to the military despotism, by which they were governed.

From the position of Zacatecas, it being the point where all travel to the city of Mexico, Tampico, or the northern departments, centered, it was agreeable for me, sometimes to find a countryman journeying in some direction of the compass, from the most of whom I heard complaints of the indifferent treatment they had received from the authorities. Whether these allegations were strictly true, I cannot, by my own knowledge, testify, for I had not, up to that period of my journey, had cause to complain of oppression from Mexican officers, and as for the reception which I had everywhere met with, from citizens as well as those in power, it had been of the most hospitable and polite character, though at the same time it might have had its origin in respect to the commission in my pocket, and not to the citizen of the United States.

It should be remembered that Mexico is a country of great extent, about three thousand miles, and that the few Americans who are scattered over it, might not only have their privileges infringed on, but their persons imprisoned without cause or remedy, as was the case in the department of Sonora, as before mentioned, at a distance of fifteen hundred miles from the minister of the United States, and for the reason of the wide separation from the legation, of the commission of a hostile act, the minister can never have an immediate knowledge of what has happened, so that he might remonstrate.

The unfortunate individuals who may have had their property or their liberties wrested from them, are almost effec-

tually barred from all hope of redress, in communicating the facts to the American legation, as there are now no consuls in the interior, for the reasons of the distance from the city of Mexico, and that letters by the mails from Americans are intercepted, as has been charged by the sufferers. Therefore, long after the commital of one of our citizens to prison, for or without an alleged offence, it is only incidentally known by his execution, or a cruel death, consequent to the diseases produced by confinement.

The question may arise, why do not American citizens, when they have suffered the loss of property, visit the seat of government and urge in person their complaint? The answer is, that the individual, bereft of means, and broken hearted, in the first place, feels an indifference common to the unfortunate, and as Mexico is the most dangerous and expensive country in the world to travel in, he could never hope to meet the minister, if he met him at all, with respect. It most generally happens that ruined persons are obliged, under such circumstances, to use daily efforts for a living: precisely in the same manner as the unsuspecting, uncalculating, honest-hearted citizen, who, to meet a momentary relief, is wheedled out of his estate by the usurer, and when all his property has vanished, before his benighted infatuation is awakened, he finds himself defenceless, being too poor for litigation; and thus, with a stubborn spirit, sinks to the scorn of the proud into his grave.

It may not be improper, at the present time, to express my unfeigned pleasure in having it in my power to testify to the marked solicitude which Gen. Thompson felt for the welfare and the protection of his fellow countrymen: for during all my stay at the city, I can affirm, that in the frequent meetings I had with him, his deportment was always gentlemanly, familiarly easy, and ardently friendly to all Americans; while, at the same time, his every consideration seemed to be engrossed in the perplexing and vexatious negotiations he was obliged to carry on with a prejudiced and

insulting government, located in the cranium of a Dictator, and his sycophantic myrmidons.

Notwithstanding some Americans have complained of cruel and barbarous treatment, yet I found some who, like myself, are, in general, pleased with the country and the climate of Mexico, as also satisfied with the polite and hospitable reception they meet with from the inhabitants, both foreigners and natives.

It was not until the 29th instant, that I visited the pleasant retreat of the Alemada of Zacatecas. This is a lovely and romantic place. It is sufficient in length, but not in breadth. However this is not to be attributed to a want of good taste on the part of the citizens, for the Alemade, confined as it is between two mountains, is the only level spot of land within the compass of the city. It is in the form of an eliptic circle, having round it a stone wall, and layed off with two promenades, and a carriage way around it. There is an abundance of shrub and flower on the borders of the walks, and the whole is shaded by trees, receiving their irrigation from a large fountain in the centre. On each side of the Alemade, a little rising the mountain, there is a church, which adds much to the picturesque scene. Upon looking up at one of those churches I discovered through the branches of the trees, a monument situated in the front of the edifice, and, on my ascending to the honorary pile, I perceived from the epitaph that it was erected in honour and to the memory of Senor Don Francisco Garcier, who was governor of the department of Zacatecas, when it was taken by Santa Anna, in 1833. The bronze bust of the patriot is said to be a good likeness of the original, and was cast from an impression taken in plaster of Paris, by Dr. Jenkins, an English physician, who attended the deceased in his last illness. With him, the Zacatecans say, departed Rienzi, the last of the Romans.

On my return from the Alemade, I met a large body of prisoners, who, Dr. Jenkins informed me, were the united

brethren, being all manacled together, two and two. I have ever noticed, in every town and village through which I passed, numerous gangs chained in a like manner, and it should be remembered that those poor wretches were not the volunteers for the army, but prisoners of war and of crime, suffering the penalties of their different offences. The sight of these human beings is truly distressing, for through the indifference of their garments could be easily perceived the weight of their irons.

The penalty in Mexico, for all misdemeanours against the law, is hard labour upon the streets and the public highways, excepting such where the law or the will of the judge requires death. The public improvements are all indebted to the prisoners for their completion; for if a street is to be paved, a road to be made, or a bridge to be built, the prisoner is the labourer, and in this way the cost to the public is not taken so much into consideration as if the work had to be let out to the lowest bidder, and paid for, when finished, in hard dollars and cents; but, to the contrary, the Commonwealth in its expenditures is but collecting its dues, for the prisoners owe an amount of toil which is obliged to be liquidated, for they must return the price required of them for the wickedness they have committed; and ways are devised, as above mentioned, for them to comply with their obligations; and in this manner the public works have been pursued, for the Mexicans have never been famed for bridge, turnpike, or canal companies.

It has been a question which the mild institutions of the United States gave rise to, whether it would be better for the punishment of crimes not deserving death, to make scavengers and labourers of criminals upon the highways, exposed to public view, or else to confine them closely in dark dungeons for meditation and repentance, or keep them employed within the walls of the prison.

The moral influence which the penitentiary system has over the offender, is acknowledged to be the best that has

ever been adopted in any country, to punish the guilty for his crime, and give ample opportunity for inward and outward atonement. Still it has been urged that the exposing method is better calculated to deter the innocent from falling into the examples of the criminal, by having the punishment of crime before their view. It is contended by some that the guilty never reform under the chastisement of the law, and that degraded as he must ever be, by having suffered a penalty before the public eye, he never can feel encouraged afterwards to return to the paths of rectitude and virtue.

It is a source of complaint in some of the States that, owing to the considerable number of convicts who are kept industriously at work within the walls of the penitentiaries, the honest mechanic is injured, by glutting the markets with articles of his peculiar manufacture; and that the penitentiary system is an injury to the citizen, who is obliged to pay out of his pocket a tax to support a competition in the business by which he derives his bread: and thus, undesignedly, the law, by its incongruity, oppresses the innocent in punishing the guilty. But the statute, like all other human devices, has its inconsistencies; and in the mother of States I have seen, in one of her corporations, the public authorities sell at auction the vagrant, and the policeman for a trifle becoming the purchaser, would bind the new-made white slave, and force him to labour on the public highways; while the laws of the same State, in commendable mercy, incarcerate in prison, from the odium of the gaze of the world, him who has committed the basest of offences. I only mention these facts to show that, in the wisdom of making laws, the vagrant is in my opinion more severely punished, in Virginia, than the thief or the murderer.

On my return to No. 43, I was aroused by the sound of a small hand-bell; and, as there are no such pursuits as auctions in Mexico, I felt determined to know its meaning, and upon looking out I perceived the host on its way to some

penitent upon a dying bed. For the benefit of those who have never witnessed a scene of the kind, I will attempt to describe it, and if I should err in any particular, I trust that the good Catholic brethren will excuse me, for I can testify to what I have seen, not that I understood the solemn performance.

When I had gained the front window of my room, I beheld a coach drawn by mules, called the Holy Ghost carriage, which is kept at a church exclusively for religious purposes. In it was seated a priest, on the back seat, reading a small book, and before him were two boys dressed in scarlet robes, holding burning candles in their hands. To the rear of the coach were formed two lines, of about ten in each, who all had candles, and between these lines was a youth with a bell, which he tinkled slowly; while behind was a motley crowd, which looked neither religious, civilized, nor savage. As the whole procession advanced, all the people, both in the street and the houses, fell upon their knees, with hands crossed upon their bosoms, from which position they did not rise until the holy father had passed. I was informed that, upon the arrival of the coach at the house of the afflicted, the right holy man would descend, and, with the cross in his hand, approach the bed-side of the diseased, where, after confession, the sacrament was administered, and having received the forgiveness and the benedictions of the father, the soul was prepared for the mansions of the blessed.

There was a friar who resided near my lodgings, of whom I observed that, whenever he rode or walked out, a sheep of pure long wool would always accompany him. So far from this being a ludicrous scene, it did appear to me as if there was a good moral lesson in the aspect of the friar and his favourite—for no one, of Christian information, could look upon the innocent countenance of the one, and the pious face of the other, without being reminded of the meek and lowly lamb who was slain for the redemption of mankind.

The friar belonged to the Guadaloupé order, called the Gray Friars, who are the missionaries and preachers of the Gospel, and I was informed were the only clergy in Mexico, who could have any pretensions to virtue and piety. In consequence of the high estimation in which these friars are held, the dead are always shrouded in one of their gowns, if it could be obtained—and, indeed, it was believed, that death was in a great degree robbed of its sting, by the dying knowing that they were to be buried in a Gray friar's cloak, and a good purse do they have to pay, who are so fortunate as to secure this habit, more especially if it has ever been worn by the holy man.

Since I have alluded to the burying of the dead, I will mention an enormity of crime that I never heard had an existence in any other country than Mexico. The grave there cannot escape the ladrone, and therefore the dead are never buried with any thing that might be accounted of utility or value, in order to prevent the otherwise inevitable disinterment of the deceased, as was the case with the remains of the nephew of the American consul general, Col. Wilcox.

The gray cloak is too sacred and worthless a garment for the pious thieves to disturb, and besides, they are aware that they have to make confession of the deed.

The coffins in Mexico are not made like ours, peaked at both ends, but point at the foot and expand to the head, in the shape of a wedge. The poor are buried in what is called an "universal coffin," by the body of the deceased being carried to the grave in a box belonging to the public. When the corpse arrives at the grave, it is rolled out of the bier coffin into its shallow home; and, in a state of naked nature has the clods heaped over it.

Before closing this chapter, I wish to remark that I have devoted as much attention as to any other one thing, to the system of the government of the republic of Mexico, and I attentively marked the deleterious effects of the different points of misrule upon the prosperity of the country. My

exclusive object is to make a correct statement of the political and other affairs of unhappy Mexico that I may deem most prominent, so that those who are desirous may have a true detail of the state and standing of our sister republic, and this I cannot do without disregarding all application that may be made of the facts to our own government or any other.

My friend, Mr. Scott, of the mint, said that iron in Zacatecas was worth twenty-five cents per pound, which was more than had to be given for brass, and that it was as necessary to weigh it to his workmen as silver, for they would as soon steal the one as the other. The high value of iron is alone accounted for, without a difference of opinion, to the protective system.

Prohibitory duties are indiscriminately levied upon all hardwares, by Santa Anna. There is an abundance of iron ore in Mexico, said to be of excellent quality; but, for the want of fuel, it cannot, but at a few places, be manufactured —and that only by rendering it more valuable than the precious metals. Stone coal has never been discovered in any portion of the country, and it would require the fostering care of centuries to cultivate forests sufficient to supply the land with that all important article, wood, which is necessary for manufacturing purposes. The revenues of the country being entirely lopped off by a commerce with foreign nations, the expenses of government were attempted to be met by direct taxation, and the bonus exacted from the monopoly of manufactures.

It was said to have been no difficult matter to reward the Dictator's private pocket, that the public coffers might be defrauded of its just dues. The individual happiness of the people had never once been consulted, and in consequence of the inability of a majority of the inhabitants to meet the prices of wares and merchandise, the Mexicans were compelled to return to their garments of leather and skins, in which the first revolution found them.

But for the want of fuel Mexico, in justice to itself, can never become a manufacturing country generally, whereas if this natural deficiency were once removed, she might, with the hope of success, compete with other nations—for the price of labour, the great obstacle in the way of the United States manufacturer, would be obviated, by its being abundant and cheap, perhaps as much so as with any other poor and oppressed people.

The farmer in Mexico never has to pay more than six dollars, one peck of corn, and a half a peck of beans per month for his field-hands; while the old, the young, and the females are obtained at diminished rates. I am persuaded, from my observations of that country, and the knowledge of my own, that nothing can be so self-evident as that neither the one nor the other can ever come into a successful competition with the old world, where fuel and labour are the most abundant of their resources—and that for either, or both of them, to attempt to carry out the principle, will only be to force their articles of manufacture upon their own population, as is the case in Mexico, at exorbitant prices; for European nations can afford to sell cheaper, and must for ages monopolize the commerce of the world.

CHAPTER XV.

My interpreter. Acquainted my interpreter with the knowledge I possessed. His remonstrance. Should depart in two days. Letter of introduction to Mr. John Kimble. Letters of introduction. Departed from Zacatecas. Caratilla. Unmanageable mule. Malanoche, the (bad night mountain.) Upsetting of caratilla. My ribs injured and interpreter's collar-bone broken. Confusion. Retrograde motion. No. 43. Interpreter not able for fatigue. My resolve. Second departure from Zacatecas. Demanded my cash. Money missing. Money found. My journey. March to Frisnillo. Ride in a Spanish saddle. House of Mr. Kimble. Opinions of Mr. Kimble. Egregiously imposed upon. Recommends an interpreter. Hacienda de la Beneficio Minerale. Expenses. Crushing machine. Grinding-mill. Great square. Quicksilver. Copper bell. Silver casted solid lumps. Mint. Weighing of the metal. The mines of Zacatecas and Frisnillo. Took leave of Mr. Kimble. Lost. Encounter with a Mexican. Two young men. My troubles. Coffee. Mr. K. and my interpreter. Interpreter an intelligent man. Departure from Frisnillo. Grotesque appearance. A band of robbers. Bones bleached on the plains. Uneasiness of my interpreter. Bound to Sain Alto. Become used to a Spanish saddle. Threw myself from my mule. Exchange saddles. Alcalde's cane. Administration of oaths. Sufferings increased. Eat heartily at Chili. Sain Alto. Dinner. Chocolate. Settlement of bill. Quarrel. Warm country. Maquey. Pulque. Three men upon the plain. My gloves. Table-land. A nipple of a mountain. Narrow defile. Sombremete. Demanded water. Mule knocked the tumbler.

It was not many days after my removal to 43, that I made the important discovery that my delay in Zacatecas was not caused by the preparations making by my interpreter for my journey to Caneles, but that, like an enterprising Yankee, who perceived the speculation that might accrue from the sale of a few stoves and clocks in that city, he had had some imported from New York, which had just arrived in time to save their *distance* from being rendered contraband, and he was profitably employed in selling his merchandise, so ingeniously smuggled, under the pretext of devoting his time in my employment.

When this fact was imparted to me I acquainted him, without delay, of the knowledge I possessed, and assured him that I should discharge him from my service. However, his remonstrances prevailed over my objections, for he made himself out to be as pure as an angel of light; and, as I was obliged to have an interpreter, I resolved to be

more watchful of my countryman, and cause him to answer my purpose, as a native, by giving him to understand that he had lost my confidence, and that I acknowledged no friend but my Toledo-blade, and my six-barreled pistols; for that my travels in the country had sufficiently satisfied me that reliance upon any other resource, for honest protection, was folly.

My interpreter assured me that we should take our departure in two days' time, for then, he said, my cartera would be finished, with all the accompanying bed-clothing. He also stated, that he had purchased one horse, and hired ten mules for transportation; but as the plains on the way to Durango were of a champaign character he had put himself to the trouble of obtaining, for my comfort, a caratilla for us to ride in. And as he could not consent to be idle, he said, he would have time to make sale of some watches he had in his possession.

A few days after my arrival at Zacatecas I presented a letter of introduction I had been politely furnished with by an Irish gentleman in the city of Mexico, to Mr. John Kimble, of Frisnillo. Mr. K. I found to be a perfect gentleman, and a native of New Hampshire. During his residence in Zezatecas he had become wedded to a lovely Mexican lady. Although he was a resident of Frisnillo, where he was administradór of the haciendo mineral of that town, yet I was so fortunate as to meet him here, and present my letter. Through him I had to acknowledge my obligations for the favour of a letter from his lady to Ami Señora Da Fernino Bernal Lakeman, of the city of Durango. This lady is the niece of the late renowned Gen. Bolivar, of South America, and the wife of an American. I was likewise indebted to him for letters from Don Antonio Castrillon, judge; to Al S'r. Sic'o D. Fernando Ramires, a distinguished lawyer, and ex-deputy of Mexico. The respected judge also did me the favour and honour to address a letter to Al Cesñio S'r. Gobernade y Commandante Jene-

ral D' José Antonio Heredia; and the Hon. Bocanegra, secretary of foreign relations for Mexico, had, previous to my leaving the capitol, tendered me another, with a request that he would do every thing in his power to forward my intentions. The prefect, Sr. Sic. D. Viviano Beltraur likewise honoured me with a letter of introduction to a distinguished lawyer, of the city of Durango.

Everything being in complete preparation, my interpreter and self took our seats in the caratilla for our departure, on the morning of the first day of February, cheered with the hope that the journey would be a speedy and delightful one. However, on our very set-out, we experienced an ill omen, or mortification, produced by the obstreperousness of one of the cargo-mules, who would dash into every cross street and lane, much to the fright of the citizens he surprised, while the servants would spur after him with their lassoes, exclaiming angrily, *Diablo animal*, (devil animal.) We at length succeeded in passing through the city, after having attracted crowds to witness our perplexity. No sooner had we passed the last house of the city than we commenced the ascent of the *Malanoche*, (bad night mountain,) and we had scarcely got half-way up it, than, in defiance of all the drivers, the diablo animal turned and ran into the city again, which manoeuvre caused more vexatious delay. After a while, however, the mouse-coloured mule was recovered, when our journey was resumed.

The Malanoche is of great height, and travelled by a road constructed by an English engineer, and made by the prisoners. The top being gained, and our descent commenced, I perceived that all was not right, and quickly directed my interpreter to command the driver to halt, but, as soon, the wretched contrivance upset. We were sitting in omnibus-fashion, face to face, and as the turn was to the right, the left shoulder of my interpreter lodged against my side so violently as to injure two of my ribs. The American received the greatest damage, his collar-bone being

badly broken. I first succeeded in extricating myself, by passing under the heels of the harnessed mules, and immediately proceeded to tear away obstructions and rescue my nterpreter, who, in agony, was calling loudly for help, which, when done, I had time to look about and behold the scene. Marcellino, the driver, was bleeding at the nose, while the other servants were speechless, standing by, as if they were at mass or a burial. The animals had scattered over the mountain-side, while guns, swords and pistols, as well as Bowie-knives, were strewed all around.

My journey was destined, from the misfortune that had overtaken me, to have a retrograde motion, and, with much anxiety for my interpreter, we hastened back to Zacatecas, my own distress measurably overcome by sympathy for his sufferings. Stopping again at No. 43, Dr. Jenkins attended and used his professional services for us.

The excitement of the occasion having subsided, my mind naturally reverted to the long journey before me, and the difficulties to be overcome. My interpreter, with his fracture, would not be able to proceed, perhaps, for twenty or thirty days, which time, to be lost, would have interfered much with my arrangements, and I, therefore, determined not to remain for his recovery, whatever inconvenience or pain it might cost me; and I accordingly ordered the necessary preparations to be made for my departure on horseback.

Previous to my second departure from Zacatecas, disagreeable facts came to my knowledge, respecting my interpreter. In the first instance, having demanded my cash of him, which, for safety and convenience, I had deposited in his carpet-bag, I found a deficiency in the sum I placed there, of two hundred dollars, which I made known to him, but received an answer that the money had been expended for necessaries. I had been careful in paying out my cash to take vouchers for all my expenditures, and instantly called him to account for a general settlement. Having clearly

demonstrated his dishonesty, I declared to him that I would bring before him the most respectable of the foreigners of the city, and, in his presence, prove the fraud and theft. The penitent man wept, and implored me not to expose him, for he was willing to return me my money; and he did make good one hundred and forty dollars, promising me the remaining sixty at the moment of my departure. True to his nature, however, he managed to secure that amount to himself, and, rather than be longer troubled, and detained by him, I was advised to consent to its loss, with mortified regret and vexation.

On the 4th inst. I commenced again my journey, my friend, Mr. Scott, accompanying me a short distance. The mountain past, the plain was a dead level. My day's travel was uninterrupted by any other incident worthy of remark. The road had also a company of troopers, who were on their way returning to Frismillo, from having conducted a large amount of silver to Zacatecas. The soldiers upon the plain rendered travelling, upon that day, comparatively safe. By two o'clock I had ended my journey, and upon dismounting at the meson, I discovered that my ride in the Spanish saddle had greatly unmanned me; for, from the erect and forward inclined position I had for several hours been obliged to maintain, (for there are no changes or shifts to be made in one of these saddles,) my bones ached, while my muscles were all cramped.

Previous to my separation from Mr. Scott, I requested of him to direct one of my servants to conduct me, on my arrival at Frisnillo, to the house of Mr. Kimble. After having rested a short time I accompanied my servant to the hacienda beneficio mineral; for that proved to be the residence of my American friend.

On my meeting with him, and acquainting him with the misfortunes that had befallen me, and my being compelled to travel without an interpreter, he appeared much concerned, and replied that, though I was not very unfortunate in

parting with my first engagement, yet he considered it to be almost impossible for me to accomplish my journey without an interpreter, as there were numberless obstacles that I knew nothing of to meet me on the way, and being unacquainted with the Spanish language, my property and life were at hazard.

Mr. Kimble informed me that our countryman and the Englishman, of whom my animals had been obtained, had grievously imposed on me, but that I would have to make the best of a bad bargain. He said that the only individual he knew who could speak English, was an American, who had been in his service but a short period, and from his limited knowledge of him he could not recommend his services as being what I desired. But, as I would have no opportunity of employing an interpreter before reaching Durango, I was induced to take him along.

Mr. Kimble related that my countryman had some peculiarities, as he had been residing, in an obscure manner, for seventeen years with the lowest class of Mexicans, and had forgotten much of his mother-tongue. He therefore advised me to be upon my guard, and not to give him an opportunity of deceiving me.

I was conducted by the polite Mr. Kimble over his hacienda beneficio mineral, the largest one in the world, and where more silver was manufactured than at any other hacienda known. This mine is the only one worked to any profitable extent in the whole country that entirely belongs to a Mexican company. To give my readers an understanding of its magnitude, and the consequent expenditures of raising the ores, and reducing them to silver, Mr. K. assured me that it required an outlay of fifty thousand dollars per week to conduct its operation. The mine is worked by steam-power, the fuel costing fourteen dollars per cord.

The administrador conducted me first to the crushing apartment. In this extensive room were many tons of ore, deposited in the condition in which it was brought from

the mine. The ore resembled fragments of stone, fresh hammered for a Macadamised road, each piece large enough to pass through an inch ring. In this form it is thrown under the crushing mill to be pulverised. This machine is similar to a powder mill, with the exception that the beams are heavier and closer together. Having gone through the process of crushing, the ore is removed to the grinding mills, and in this hacienda there are many.

The grinding mills are circular, and from ten to fifteen feet in diameter. They can be propelled by any kind of power, but in Mexico that of mules is most generally used. The bottoms are of porphyritic rock of the greatest solidity that can be obtained. Over this solid disk are suspended three long heavy stones, also of porphyry. These are held to their places by chains, which connect them to three horizontal beams, extending from the shaft pivot that rests upon the centre of the disk. The stones have their front edges a little elevated, so as to receive the ore, when in motion, while the rear portion performs it duty by grinding it to an impalpable powder.

When the ore is put into the grinder, water is from time to time added to it, until, in the process of pulverization, it acquires a thick and paste-like appearance and consistency, which requires much time. The process of grinding completed, the ore is removed to the great square of the hacienda, which I should judge contains about two acres of land, where it is deposited in circular beds of about ten feet in diameter, upon the pavement of the square, in the same manner as a brick yard. Salt, or salt earth is, in suitable quantities, sprinkled over the pile, as also a little proportion of pulverized pine bark, and if this cannot be secured, dried manure is used as a substitute. The whole is then trodden by horses for some hours, until all the parts have completely acquired an admixture. It is then left for three or four days, when a substance, prepared from copper ore, called *micastral*, is added. The whole mass is then sprinkled with

quicksilver in considerable quantities. It is then worked with horses for five or six hours, after which it is left until the next day, when a little water is added, being worked repeatedly from day to day until the whole has effectually amalgamated. When this is consummated, a suitable portion is deposited in an elevated stone vat, so that the water may escape. A large amount of water is again added to the ore, when the whole is rapidly mixed, by a fly wheel in the vat, propelled by mules, just like the pool of a paper mill.

In this process the amalgam of the mineral settles to the bottom, and when the whole mass has been thoroughly washed, the water is discharged, and the offal escapes. The deposited amalgam is cleansed by being filtered through a canvas, until it assumes a plastic state, when it is made into forms of triangular bricks, by means of moulds. These are set up into a circular mass, with interstices between each. A copper bell is then placed over the whole, in the presence of all the officers of the hacienda, which is then covered over with charcoal, and this is kept ignited for about twelve hours, by which time the mercury is all sublimated. Being allowed to cool, the silver is taken out in a pure state, ready to cast into bars.

It requires six pounds of quicksilver to obtain one mark of silver, including the incorporation and the bath, which is the amalgamation, and in the separation there is a loss of the same weight of silver, as of mercury, which is a fraction, besides an additional consumption of mercury, that has never been accounted for.

During the whole of the above process of extracting the silver, that is to say, from the commencement of the washing, until the fire is lighted around the bell containing the amalgam, the administrador has his officers summoned to attend, to prevent the secreting of the metal, but after the charcoal is ignited all is safe, for if those left to watch the fire, should raise the bell, the inhaling of the sublimed mercury, a certain result of the imprudence, would destroy life.

The appearance of the amalgam, when the copper bell is lifted from it, is porous, like a honey-comb, which is caused by the quicksilver leaving the silver in sublimation. Thus it is perceived, that to make pure silver is no easy task, but requires days of labour from man, beast, and machinery, as well as the watchfulness necessary to be bestowed on it.

After the silver is cast into solid lumps, about the size and shape of pigs of lead, as seen in the United States, it is carried to the mint, when, agreeable to its weight, being previously assayed, its value in coin is received.

From the office of the administrado, it is next carried into the furnace room, where the pigs are melted, for the purpose of casting them into bars, eighteen inches in length, one and a half broad, and a quarter of an inch in thickness. They are then weighed to discover if they correspond with the original weight of the pigs. The bars are then put under the rolling mill, where they are reduced to a flatness, consistent with the dimensions of the coin to be manufactured. The thin slips of silver are then taken to machinery, where they are cut to the different sizes of money, and from thence to the edging mill, which prepares it to receive the impression of the Mexican eagle, prickly pear, bee hive, sun, &c. From thence it had to pass through the pickling, or washing apartment, where the coin is cleansed, and receives its perfect brightness, and is rendered fit for use.

The silver, from the time of its being first melted into pigs, until it is washed, never passes from the hands of one workman into those of another, without the scrutiny of weight and counting. And thus it is, the invaluable metal, when scattered to the world, in its fluctuating passage, ever creates the greatest solicitude to its possessor, until it returns to nature, by invisible atoms.

When examining the rich mines of Mexico, the question has often arisen in my mind, what has, and does become of the vast amounts of silver and gold that the industry of man

has rescued from the depths of the earth? It did seem to me that any one of the mines I examined, would supply the pockets of every living creature, continually, with small change. The mines of Zacatecas and Frisnillo are said to be about the oldest known in Mexico, and from their richness, and the length of time they have been worked, have produced an amount of bullion that would almost seem incredible. A gentleman, of high standing as a miner, informed me that it had been estimated that Zacatecas and Frisnillo had yielded two hundred millions of the precious metals. There are two kinds of silver mines, designated by the letters A and U, owing to the two different ways that veins of silver make their appearance generally.

Late in the evening I took my reluctant leave of Mr. Kimble, who assured me that he would visit me at the meson, when my intended interpreter should arrive in town from the country. Upon my leaving the mine, I discovered that my servant had not waited for me, and that I should have to find my way alone to the meson in the heart of the city, which I had no doubt that I could easily do. I returned by the same streets, as I imagined I came, until at length I could not remember where I was. I hastened from street to street, with the hope of coming to the well-known big door of my meson, but none that I beheld was the one looked for. The sun was setting, and I trembled at the thought of finding myself lost in the town of Frisnillo at night.

Although I felt a confusion at the idea of confessing my condition to any one, and had some apprehensions of consequences in letting my bewildered situation be known, I resolved to speak to a Mexican who was standing in the street. I accordingly said to him, *Tray game diligencia meson*; the man gave me a piercing look, and commenced making a long speech in Spanish, which I silenced by repeatedly saying, *No intendi, Señor*. He, with much surprise, again stared at me, then turned upon his heels and walked off. I was surprised at his behaviour, for I thought

I had asked him in good Spanish to carry me to the diligencia meson; but what the more surprised me was, that I showed the rascal a *rial*, which in all conscience would have paid him well for his trouble.

I proceeded but a little way before I met two well-dressed young men, who had much the appearance of foreigners, and I determined to accost them in plain English, but they shook their heads. At length one of them replied by the interrogation, *Parley vous Francais?* and with more mortification than ever, I had to give the negative answer. I then endeavoured, by signs, to make the gentlemen understand me, and repeating often the name of the house I wished to find, one of them took me by the arm, and safely delivered me at the meson.

My troubles were not at an end then; for I was so much distressed that I could not find my room, and not only were my servants wanting, but not a living soul could I behold upon the premises. I had to wait at least one hour before Marcelino, my principal man, arrived. He appeared to be as big a fool as myself, for I could not make him understand that I wished to be shown to my room. At last the thought occurred to me to say cartéra, and with hastened delight he left me, and in a few moments returned, bearing my outspread cot upon his head. With much difficulty I turned him about, and following him to the apartments from whence he brought the cartera, I found my lodgings and my baggage.

Marcelino prepared me some coffee, of which I partook without an appetite; but, by the time I had finished it, my friend, Mr. Kimble, and an Englishman, whose name I have now forgotten, appeared, bringing with them my future interpreter. Mr. K. gave me much friendly advice respecting my journey; and, after having exhorted my new man to be faithful and brave, he left with his companion, both taking an affectionate farewell of me, with many hopes

that I would triumph over every difficulty, and make safe my way to my port of destination.

My interpreter, although indifferently dressed, was a remarkably good-looking and intelligent man. One thing, however, was predominant in his physiognomy—dejectedness—which immediately won my sympathy for him, as I presumed that he had been oppressed by the misfortunes of the world. His conversation was free, though he had a slight impediment in his speech—but he did not seem inclined to indulge in vivacity of thought, as all he said was in as solemn a manner as preaching, and very sensible.

Early on the morning of the 5th instant, I took my departure from Frisnillo. My servant, Marcelino, had mounted me on a beautiful little mule, which he recommended as being an uncommon easy pacer, and it came up to his description, for it ambled along as gaily as though it did not carry a burden of one hundred and sixty-five, or seventy pounds. My company had a grotesque appearance. It consisted, besides myself, of five men all well armed, and ten animals. One of the mules carried my trunk and bedding, while another was loaded with my kitchen, thus leaving two for a change, or to meet casualties.

Every thing, so far as I was able to perceive, went on smoothly. My interpreter kept close to my side, and as often as he cast his eyes over the plain, and behind him, he would wish himself one day's journey from Frisnillo. He related to me the facts of an attack which a band of robbers had made, but two nights previous, upon a hacienda campus in sight of Frisnillo, when five of the ladrones, and two of the rancheros were killed. He said that, notwithstanding he had never attended the lectures in the United States, yet he was a doctor in Mexico, and that some of the wounded in the late action were his patients. He affirmed that he cared as little about fighting as any other person, but that he craved a natural death, and abominated the thought of bleaching upon the plains. His uneasiness

was considerable, and indeed had the effect of creating additional apprehensions with myself.

My journey, for that day, was as far as Sain-Alto, a distance of full fifty miles from Frisnillo. We therefore had no time to lose, but kept our animals pacing onwards as briskly as they would go. Although the previous day's ride had somewhat disconcerted me, the set-out of this morning was not as disagreeable as I imagined it would be, and I was in hopes that I would soon become used to a Spanish saddle, and feel as nimble as the best of them; but, oh, Genius of Mazeppa! I had a different story to tell, for by the middle of the day I could bear it no longer, and in agony and anger, I threw myself from my easy-pacing mule, and tumbled upon the grass, while the little animal commenced feeding around me. Out of the stiff strong leathers of my new saddle, that held me in a position precisely as if I was laced in a rack before a Spanish inquisition for torture, I felt easy; and, from that moment, I had no doubt but that Spanish saddles, so called, were invented by Philip the Second, for the iniquitous purposes of the inquisition. I examined all the saddles of my men, and found that that of my interpreter was the oldest, and the leathers could in some degree be made pliable, so I proposed a swap with him, though my own was worth twenty times as much as his.

At two o'clock in the evening, we stopped at a house to noon it. While reposing on a bed, I heard my interpreter say that we were safe, which caused me to inquire the meaning of his declaration. He replied that he saw hanging on the wall of the room we were in, the Alcalde cane, pointing to it as he spoke, and adding that he always felt safe when lodged in the house of an Alcalde. The commission of an Alcalde is accompanied with a cane, by order of the government, dressed off with a bunch of silk tassels, and a silver or gold head. The officer in authority cannot preside on any occasion without his cane; neither are the people bound to obey him without this insignia of his power in his

enclose, in so compact a compass, so many elements of human comfort and civilization."

The maquey is as luxuriant in its growth as that of any other plant that I have seen, sometimes measuring ten or twelve feet across the circumference; yet it is astonishing to behold, that it matters not as to the soil upon which it grows, it will present the same appearance of vigorous life. I have seen it growing on stone walls, where not a particle of earth could be detected by the eye, with the same admirable beauty as upon the rich soil. How then does this plant sustain itself? The regions of the upper table lands are arid and dry; for no moisture can be detected in the atmosphere, day or night, during the dry season, apart from the lakes and rivers. How then does it exist? Is it possible that, without earth, clinging only to the rocks to hold its upright position, it must receive its nourishment from the gasses of the atmosphere? Doubtless nature in its economy designed that the periodical south-west winds that sweep over the plains and mountains during the dry season, from the Pacific, brings with it moisture from the ocean, and thus supplies vegetation with hydrogen, although the human eye and feeling cannot perceive it. And too, the maquey excelling, if any thing, in its deep green aspect and symmetrical and heavy leaves, yields every twenty-four hours one quart or more of rich fluid called pulque. In whatsoever advantage this plant may be considered, I am compelled to decide that it is the wonder of vegetable nature.

After we had travelled about three leagues from Sain-Alto, my interpreter called my attention to three men, who had suddenly made their appearance upon the plain, and it was not long before they commenced a rapid speed towards us. Marcelino drew his sword, and fell back to my side. I jerked my gloves from my hands, and hastily threw them away, and in another moment we were all prepared to meet the worst. Our assailants supposing, perhaps, that their re-

PALM TREE. ORGANOS. PRICKLEY PEAR. MAGUAY.

ception might be too warm, from the precipitous defence we were making, changed their direction from us, and, our march being resumed, they were soon lost to view. I informed my interpreter that he might have my gloves, if he would dismount and pick them up; but he declared that he had no intention of encumbering his hands when his life was in danger. The servants also all refused to take them, and in fact gloves are not used in Mexico when travelling, for no man can tell at what moment he may need the best use of his fingers. I determined also, that if I could not wear them, they should not be in the way, when I had a call for bullets and cartridges from my pockets.

My journey, for that day, was over a table land, similar to that which I had, on the day previous, travelled. But towards the close of evening, a nipple of a mountain was pointed out to me, which had the resemblance of a Mexican hat, and was therefore called *Sombrereto.* This peak overlooked a town of the same name. By the setting of the sun we had passed a narrow defile of the mountain, and arrived at the town of Sombrereto, a place which had formerly been of some importance in Mexico, from the abundance of silver that had been extracted from its mines; but they becoming unprofitable, were deserted, and the town left to decay, its inhabitants depending principally upon highway robbery for support. As I entered the town, and was passing a large building, I was hailed by a custom-house officer. I informed my interpreter to say to the man, that I was an American officer, and he received in reply that all was right; for he was under the impression that I belonged to the army, and without further delay we made for the meson.

No sooner had I dismounted from my animal, than I demanded some water, for my mouth and throat were parched with thirst. A woman of the meson handed me a pint glass of the pure crystal element, and having taken it, I was

handing the glass back to her, with the request that it should be filled again, when I supposed my wearied little mule, who was standing by my side, craving water as much as myself, knocked the tumbler out of my hand. The woman passionately demanded fifty cents for her satisfaction, but Marcelino interposed and quieted the difficulty for thirty-seven and a half. Food and sleep were my next wants, and, in their turns, I happily devoted myself.

CHAPTER XVI.

What direction I would take. Departure from Sombrereto. Under much excitement. Fatigue, hunger and thirst. Haeienda Campus de les Muleros. Small red wolves. Sheep. Great house. Refused admittance. Hospitality of a young Mexican. His wife. Paixham balls. Diversion. Countrymen in pursuit of a lawyer. Understanding of right and wrong. Servants feet locked under a mule. Many small streams. Unsatisfied thirst. Mexicans never wash when travelling. La Ponta. Proceed to San Casan. Arms discharged. My duty. Corpse of two men. Travel 1400 miles. River. Iron furnace. The city of Durango. De la Santa Paula meson. Breakfast. De Cadena Casa. My walk. Two plazas. Fire arms. The Allemade of the city of Durango. The Convento of the patron Saint. Durango, a Bishopric. One of the nine mints. My servant's comparisons of coins. A retired part of the Allemade. Reflections. Vale of delusion. Civil without religious liberty. Tom Paine. Thomas Jefferson. The great silence of Mexican towns. Ruin of 400 houses. Dinner. Mr. James More and an Englishman. Snap of a pistol. Narrow escape of life. Mr. German Stalknit. His mistake. Letters of introduction. Signor Don Fernando Remizes. Hospitality. Reflections. Dwelling of Remizes. Furniture. Libraries of the ex-Deputy. His character. Suffrages for President. Introduction. Liberality. History of the United States. Alieraus. Harcourt. Courtesy of the Governor of Durango. Mr. John Belden. The people of Durango. Bishop of Durango. The Bishop's character. Cotton manufacture of the Stalknits. College of Durango. Education. Change of dress. Best of arms. To Bivouac. A tent. Letters of introduction from the Governor. Remizes. Ten loads of silver.

My interpreter informed me, that previous to our leaving Sombrereto, it would be prudent to deceive the people of that town, as to what direction I would take on my departure from it. I consented to his design of sending one of my servants into the streets to answer inquiries, by saying, that business had brought me there, and that I should on the following day go back whence I came. Marcelino preferred to perform the task, and on his return seemed to be delighted with his success. He said that he related to the people that my journey not only terminated at their town, but that it possibly was my intention to open a mine there; which information much delighted the impoverished citizens.

On the morning of the 7th inst. I took my departure from Sombrereto. My animals were driven out of the eastern end of the town, the same direction that I had entered it. No sooner, however, had we become obscured by the

houses, than we turned directly to the north, and having ascended a spur of a mountain that put us upon a plain, we hastily continued the same course for about two leagues, when Marcelino, who was well acquainted with the country, suddenly tacked due west, and after travelling one league, he resumed his proper direction of north. During all this time my interpreter and servants seemed to labour under much excitement, by continually straining their eyes to the rear, and over the table land. Marcelino said it was true, that he had no property to lose, but that the ladrones never spared the servants; for they called them poor lazy devils, and flogged them severely; while the master would be discharged, if he surrendered like a gentleman, with many thanks and applause for his industry and accumulation of money and valuables. Upon separating with him they would advise him to have at least as much for them, if they should again meet him, for if he should not, his fate would be that of his servants, if not death.

My journey, on this day, was uninterrupted, saving by fatigue, hunger and intolerable thirst; for we found neither pool nor stream of water. The country through which we travelled was uneven and rolling; but during the latter part of the day the plain became a dead level, and, from first, having to travel through the low musquito-growth, we came to a cove of broad shady trees, small, and thinly scattered over the land, which might be denominated a forest.

Just before the set of sun we hove in view of the castle of the Hacienda campus de los Muleros, (a place of mules,) yet every other kind of stock and vegetation was raised and cultivated there, for it was one of the finest estates that I had ever beheld. The sight of the premises was most congenial, for it was the first house that I had seen the whole day; although it was full five miles from me, it promised repose from my toils, at no very distant period, and I felt cheered with the hope. Presently we came upon a gang of small red wolves, common in Mexico, and then we ap-

proached a herd of many thousand sheep: at length we passed the ranchos of the place, and arrived immediately in front of the great house.

One of my servants, who had been sent before me to the castle, informed me that the administrador had said, that there was no spare room for strangers; for the house was filled with corn, saving one apartment for himself and wife; and that I would have to seek lodgings in one of the ranchos. The servant also stated, that there was much excitement with the people, resulting from the fact of two murders; that had been committed that day, near Muleros. I felt perplexed and disappointed in not being decently housed, for I had never yet lodged in a filthy rancho.

However, there was one other good building at the place, from which a well-dressed young Mexican came out, and invited me to accept a room in his dwelling. I thanked him for the offer, which I accepted. Mine host was a gay and conversant gentleman, who had but a few weeks been wedded to a bouncing black-eyed Mexican girl. He informed my interpreter that the proprietor of Muleros was a very inhospitable man, and that he believed that he had a part in all the many robberies and murders which happened in that quarter. As for myself, the scape-gallows look of the man was conclusive evidence of the truth of this assertion.

In the morning we resumed our journey in good spirits. My interpreter appeared not to be satisfied with the arms with which I had furnished him, and had secured some large round stones, which he called his Paixham balls, which he threatened to burst against the administrador, after his shots were expended, if he should attack us. There was a small and rapid stream, that flowed through the dominions of Muleros, and for several miles from its banks were cotton-wood trees of handsome growth, pleasing to the sight of the traveller in this hot, barren and thirsty country.

During that day several things occurred of a diverting

nature. First, in passing by an extensive corn-field, I perceived up a distant tree, in the midst of the corn, a nest, and, as I really imagined, a bird in it, and observed to my interpreter that there was the largest sopilote that I ever beheld. He laughed heartily, and informed me that it was nothing more nor less than a Mexican wrapped in his serapi, guarding his crop. Crops in Mexico are watched both day and night, to prevent the stock, and two-legged thieves, from molesting it.

Again, we had not proceeded much farther, before a man came galloping up to us, and commenced addressing himself to me. Upon inquiring of my interpreter what this individual wanted, he informed me that the countryman had supposed me to be a lawyer, and that he wanted my advice against his partner in a crop of corn, in a suit for damages. I directed him to say to the man, that he had mistaken my calling, but that Marcelino had been, on some occasions, my advocate, and he might do well, perhaps, to consult with him. The man thanked me for the intelligence, and instantly spurred to the side of my servant, and, for several leagues, the client and counsellor discussed the merits of the cause, while my interpreter rapidly translated the conversation for me, much to my entertainment.

The suit of the complainant, and the decision of the case by Marcelino, was only but one other evidence, to me, of the entire want of a proper understanding of right and wrong among the Mexicans. Fraud and dishonesty in transactions are so prevalent amongst them, that they have no proper conception of how to discriminate justice from injury: and in their honest convictions of judgments, as well as the case in regard to Marcelino, the impossibility of separating low cunning and chicanery from equity is a task too severe, resulting from their practices and habits of thinking—just in the same manner, as it is said, of a lawyer, who has long appeared for the commonwealth of any country, that his judgment is so biased against the commis-

sion of crime that he cannot be convinced that any are innocent, or that there are any palliating circumstances in their favour attending the acts they are charged with. Hence it is that mankind has to mourn under a heavy weight of civil and piously bigoted oppression, perverting to its peculiar uses the statutes of God, the broad basis of which are the only fundamental principles of reason and law.

I am aware that travellers often see things, which, to those who have never been abroad, are, as St. Paul says, "hard to believe," and hence I have let incidents escape me that might have informed and entertained the minds of many.

To those who have seen the large spurs of the Mexicans, what I am going to relate will not seem incredible. The countryman, having finished his discourse, put off in full speed to find, perhaps, other advisers. But one of my servants, being wickedly disposed, started after him, to bring him back for future sport. It was not long, however, before he came back, calling lustily for help. My first thoughts were, that some banditti had made their appearance, but, as the poor man rode up to us, I soon perceived the amount of his distress. His heels were confined under his mule by his spurs being locked together; the long rowel of the right one having hooked itself to the chain of the left, that hangs under the foot. The man was as closely united to his animal as if he had been secured by lock and key; and the little *machacho* was not altogether out of distress, for the long prongs of the spur were continually jading him, and it could not be told when the tortured creature would take fright, and perhaps kill its rider. Amid the shouts and bursts of laughter of his compeers his shackles were unloosed, much to his relief. Such occurrences, my interpreter informed me, were not before unknown, for he had freed others, whom he had overtaken on the road, who had suffered in this way for hours.

My journey, for the most of this day, was close to, and parallel with a mountain, from whence flowed many small streams. The sight of the mountain-brooks had an inconceivably delightful aspect, recalling to my mind the cooling fountains of the Alleghanies, where my thirst had been so often satisfied by pure water,—the first, the second, and the third of these streams were, in their turns, stopped at, but with no satisfaction, for they were all strongly tinctured with copperas, deep green deposites of which enveloped the rocks, and covered the beds of the streams. As I could not relieve my dried and parched lips with the water, I resolved at least to wash my hands and face in it, but the Mexicans making so many objections to this, I desisted for their satisfaction.

The Mexicans never wash when travelling, believing it to be injurious to their health, and, indeed, they object to the constant use of water, being of the opinion that the dirt on their faces is less pernicious than the diseases engendered by the use of this liquid to remove it; this being a temperance carried beyond the principles of the societies of the United States; and thus I had to perish in the midst of plenty.

It was my intention to travel that day as far as La Ponta, but from the fatigue, which is better understood by those who have had to endure it, than the idea can be conveyed by description, I was advised by my interpreter to proceed no farther than San Causin, which place was then discernible, from our elevated position, some three leagues from us. With our quarters in view our pace was quickened, for there all our wants were to be supplied. We were thus progressing, when, suddenly, we discovered six men advancing in front of us. Overpowered with the toils of the day, I thought not, and cared as little, of dangers that might be brooding, and, not until it had been accomplished, did I perceive that my servants had driven my animals to one side, and my interpreter had also left the straight-forward

road, apprehending some evil, as the advancing party were better mounted and equipped than any others we had met.

Not having acted in concert with the movement of my men, timorously resolving not to yield a foot, I passed them, brushing the very points of some of their spears, at the same time holding my finger on the trigger of my double-barreled gun, as it lay on my lap, which was pointed directly at them. My servants all stopped to witness the rencontre, but it all passed away by hard looks. When I rejoined my party, my interpreter declared that he had never witnessed so fearless an experiment, for he confidently believed that I would be killed. I told him that I was conscious of having committed no act of rashness, and that, in all probability, the incident had saved us from a battle, as the party we met were no travellers, for they were without animals, or baggage of any kind.

It is the rule in Mexico, for the weaker party always to give the way. Our companies were equal; but, as I had extra animals, I certainly was entitled to the road. And if armed men, who are not travellers, do not give the road, it is conclusive evidence, as I had been advised, of their hostile intent. We arrived in safety at San Causin, a hacienda campus. The water was good; the tortillas, the frijoles, the chili and the stewed mutton, were all, to a hungry man, delightful; and sleep, on that night, was never more refreshing.

On the following morning, all of my men being in readiness to recommence the journey, which was that day to put me in the city of Durango, I gave orders that all of our guns and pistols should be discharged and reloaded, which had not been done since we left Zacatecas, as I felt desirous of witnessing the performances of our weapons. The volley we fired was equal to a commandant's salute, as we numbered about forty rounds, eighteen of which were from my own person and saddle.

At every place we stopped, accounts of murders and

robberies were detailed. The ladrones of Mexico are like the musquitoes on the Mississippi, the people saying always that, with them, there are few if any, but that a little way beyond they become very plentiful. I felt it to be my duty to be prepared, at whatsoever place it might befall me to meet with them, and we prosecuted our journey. We had not travelled more than five leagues before we came upon the corpses of two men, who had been murdered the day previous; one of them appeared to have come to his end by a bullet—the other had several shocking sabre wounds.

On this day I had to cross the same river twice. The last time I was ferried over in a dug-out, which cost me one dollar and a half, though my animals had to swim across with the Mexican who drove them. I had then travelled about fourteen hundred miles in Mexico, and of the few rivers that I had seen, none of them was above a moderate stone's throw across.

The country over which I had passed was thinly covered with musquite growth, and some cotton wood; but, upon being landed over the ferry, I was upon the plain of Durango, a beautiful level country. Although the table land was totally divested of timber, yet the mountains of Durango towered with the pine, the cypress, and other species of trees; and, near to the city, Mr. Lakeman, an American, is the proprietor of an iron furnace.

On the 9th instant, at nine o'clock at night, I entered the city of Durango, and put up at the De la Santa Patula meson. The following morning, being Sunday, I determined that I would rest, being much fatigued after the last five days' travel.

I did not take my breakfast until ten o'clock, which being over, I felt desirous of recreation by walking; and, having invited my interpreter to accompany me, I entered the streets, for a promenade in the Alémade, if I could find it. The meson joined a large religious edifice, in which the inquisition was formerly located. It is called De Cadena

Casa, the chain-house. From that building, for some few days in the year, a chain was extended across the street, during which time, if any individual committed any offence or crime against the law, and he could lay hands upon that chain, before arrested by the legal authorities, he escaped all future molestation or prosecution. Thus crime was encouraged through the instrumentality of religion. This custom had its origin from the heathenish sanctuary institutions, but it has been abandoned by the Christian church, in both Europe and America.

My walk extended round the principal plaza, upon the eastern side of which the government house is situated, where all the public business is transacted. It is also used as a garrison for the army. On the western side is the government palace, the residence of the governor and general of Durango. My way was then directed through the *de Commercio plaza*, the commercial plaza, where all kinds of fruits, provisions and merchandise were offered for sale—promiscuously spread upon the pavement; and in such places my interpreter informed me the ladrone vended such earnings as he desired to part with.

My interpreter took a fancy to a handsome gun, in the possession of a very poor Mexican; and he said that he would prove to me that the man stole it, by his taking one-third of its value for it. The gun I supposed to be worth twenty dollars, but the man, after some jewing, agreed to take ten.

The Alemade of the city of Durango was as lovely and delightful a retreat as I had ever in my life enjoyed. A grove of trees shaded its clean walks and seats, whilst a fountain of water refreshed and cooled the atmosphere. It is located between the Plaza de los Torros and the town, and commanded a view of the plain, the city, and the extended mountains around, and a more picturesque scene I never beheld. The Convento of the patron saint of the town was situated upon a romantic mound of earth and

stone. The view from this edifice excels the imagination of poet and artist, and exceeds any other scene of the kind ever before exhibited to my view. The city of Durango appeared to cover about the same amount of space as the city of Mexico. The buildings are not so high, but are, otherwise, not less in dimensions.

Durango is a Bishopric, and the two high steeples of the cathedral towered far above those of the many other churches and convents of the place.

At Durango has long been established one of the nine mints belonging to the government. It was not a little amusing to see my Zacatecas servants comparing the coins of their own city with those of Durango; while one of them said, satirically, that the bird on the Durango coin looked more like a sopilote (buzzard) than the Mexican eagle. Another responded that he would be rejoiced if either of the fowls would build a nest in his pocket, and hatch young ones there. The inhabitants of Durango were fewer than I had supposed, judging from the extent of the city. I was informed that the population did not exceed thirty thousand.

While seated under a shade, in a retired part of the Alemade, my thoughts were interrupted by the natives actually stopping to gaze at me—and casting my eyes upward to the pure, bright, serene expanse of heaven—for scarcely in nine months does a spot of cloud as big as a man's hand appear in the skies of Mexico—then beheld the mountains sublimely reaching as it were to the regions of upper air—the massive compactness of a large city, in the midst of the plain beneath—the solemnity of the Mexican countenance, and the profound stillness of the whole scene; for from that vast multitude no sounds were sent up to break the sadness of nature, and the gloom of a dense town, my mind was filled with a pleasing melancholy, and from my heart I hoped that the time might come when the Mexicans would be happy! when the veil of delusion that hangs between

them and that independence which the plastic hand of their Creator has endowed them with, would be split in twain; when their judgment would be untrammelled, and their conscience no longer made a commerce of! then, and not till then, could I imagine Mexico to be free, and enjoy the transcendent beauties and bounties of nature with which she has been blessed. For I am persuaded that there cannot be civil, without religious liberty; apart, they are a mutual aid to each other; united, they both degenerate and sink to a wedded corruption, too impure for the respect of man, and too vile to be acceptable to God! If good ever came out of evil, it was by Tom Paine's works, during the American revolution; and if glory ever covered a benefactor of the human family, it was when Thomas Jefferson first set the example of dissolving the union of church and state, and penned, for the constitution of Virginia, the declaration of independence and the liberty of conscience.

The great silence that prevails in Mexican towns is remarkable, when the church bells are not ringing, and from the garrison the clang of the trumpet-horn is no longer blown. From twelve to three o'clock in the afternoon all is still, and from a distance no sound is heard; and, in fact, in the hot valleys, and on the coasts, the doors of the houses are all locked, and the inhabitants so wrapped in sleep that a traveller might ride through the streets of a town without seeing a human being.

The city of Durango had, in the month previous to my arrival, suffered a heavy calamity, which resulted in the serious damage, more or less, and the ruin of four hundred houses. The cause of this destruction of property had its origin from the heavy rains that had fallen, which had so saturated the sun-burnt bricks, that the crumbling walls were not able to support the roofs, and of course they tumbled in. It was not in the knowledge of any one that, in in the month of January, it should rain, and none of the inhabitants had ever experienced in the wet season so great

and continued a fall of water as came so unexpectedly upon them. The sudden rise of the streams and small rivers was so rapid as to do much damage to the haciendas, as also to drown stock, and wash down houses.

On my return to the meson, my servant brought me my dinner, and while myself and interpreter were eating, two gentlemen entered the room, one of whom introduced himself to me as Mr. James Moore, an American, from the State of Tennessee; the other was an Englishman, whose name I have lost. The latter individual appeared to have been indulging too freely that day, and as we were all seated, and I was finishing my dinner, I happened to look towards the Englishman, who I perceived had my large rifle pistol in his hands, with the muzzle pointed immediately at my head, for I could see down into the barrel, while his finger was pulling at the hammer. I politely informed him what he was doing, and requested that he would turn the weapon in another direction, or else lay it down; he replied that he had never killed any one, and well understood the use of arms. Thinking that the man would have some regard for what I said, I continued my repast of lettuce and stew; but no sooner had I taken my eyes from him than I heard the snap of the pistol, and without thought I sprung from my seat, while the first self consciousness I possessed was, that I had wrested the heavy weapon from his hand, and had it uplifted in the air above his head. So pending was the fatal blow, that my poised arm seemed to tremble over him, on the verge of the almost impossible checking of the deadly fall. The terrified man sat motionless and speechless for a time, and then, to my satisfaction, left the room; for in turns each of us had been on the brink of eternity. I never knew that pistol, before or since, fail to explode a cap, and would not for the world that the same experiment should happen. After some hours the Englishman returned, and, in his apologies for what had taken place, thanked me for his life, and the lesson I had taught him.

On Monday morning, the 11th inst., feeling sufficiently refreshed for business, I looked over my letters, and found that all were in my possession but one, addressed to Mr. Germain Stalknit, a German by birth, and a gentleman who had been highly recommended to me as a high-minded and honourable man. Such was the character of Mr. S., that notwithstanding I had mislaid or lost his letter, I determined to make him a visit, and introduce myself to him, and for this purpose I procured a guide to conduct me to his house.

On entering the great door of his palace, for palace indeed it was, if splendour and large dimensions can constitute such a thing, I was shown a door to the right hand, and upon going to it, I perceived two gentlemen engaged in the endless employment (in Mexico) of counting dollars and weighing gold. One of them, who proved to be the gentleman I was desirous of seeing, without my having first spoken, said, "Doctor Gilliam, I am glad to see you, be seated, and when my brother and self have finished our present engagement, I shall be happy to converse with you."

It was not long before the accomplished gentleman again turned to me, and I in my turn addressed him, by saying, that it was true he had given me my right appellation, but that I was a person whom he had never seen: to which he replied, "Are you not Doctor Gilliam, United States Consul to Monterey?" To his surprise, I informed him that I was the brother of the individual he had mistaken me for. It was all the same with the two German gentlemen, for they seemed to be as cordial and familiar with me, as if we had been intimate all our lives.

I acquainted Mr. S. of my having once been in possession of a letter addressed to him from Zacatecas; but that on that morning I was unable to lay my hand upon it. I then presented him the letters I have before mentioned, and his politeness induced him to proffer his services in handing them to the individuals to whom they were directed. It proved that Señor Don Fernando Ramires was the brother-in-law

of Mr. Germain Stalknit. He insisted that I should dine with him that day, and said he would accompany me in the evening to Don Fernando's, and from thence to the Government Palace.

Such hospitality to a stranger, old Virginia like, can but be gratefully felt. I have heard the selfish object to extending kindness to the unknown, whom chance or business may have thrown in their towns or country, as if the world was made alone for them. By a liberal state of society, the stranger receives a benefit, while those, who in duty bestow it, are done no injury; and if time should prove that he was unworthy of attention, there is yet a pleasing reflection, that the subject has received a lesson in politeness, and perhaps is thereby instigated to refrain from evil company and bad deeds, and reform his manners. No well-bred community will slight, or indifferently treat an apparent gentleman, who in reality is as good as themselves. However, high life below stairs sometimes exposes itself, and is subjected to reproach, when otherwise it might have done honour to itself, at least have nothing lost.

Dinner being over, Mr. S. conducted me to the dwelling of Señor Don Fernando Ramires. My friend, without ceremony, entered the house, and I at once perceived that the large and elegant establishment was well furnished, being much in the style of the houses in the United States, the chairs and sofas perhaps having been imported thence by the way of Mazetlan. It happened that the proprietor was not in, and Mr. S. said that he would take the liberty of showing me the library of the ex-Deputy.

I accepted the invitation, and was conducted to a large room, not under thirty feet long, by twenty feet broad and in height. It was filled all around, from floor to ceiling, as my friend informed me, with Spanish law books.

On a large table in the centre of the room, lay piles of documents, besides the open authors of his recent consultation. Having looked in the face of many of the old volumes

which I could not understand, I was invited into an adjoining apartment, much larger, containing a greater number of folios. Mr. Stalknit related, that that was his general library, and contained works upon every branch of learning, and of several languages.

Fernando Ramires was certainly a great man, and a patriot, and as an evidence of his purity and good sense, he had that year resigned his seat in the House of Deputies, to which he had been elected for many years, publicly assigning as his reason, which was much for any man to do, at that time, in Mexico, that he could no longer consent to serve under a usurping Dictator, who had trampled the constitution under his feet, and, by force of arms, driven the deputies from their seats.

If the people of Mexico knew how to enjoy and maintain their liberties, such a civilian as Ramires would receive their suffrages as President, instead of their supporting, by their bayonets, a throne for ambitious military chieftains. But the libraries and wealth of this good man were not the most valuable of his possessions, for he was the father of a lovely and accomplished daughter, who could fluently converse in French and English as well as in Spanish. Her education and refinement, obtained by dint of application, were of the first order, and would have made her pre-eminently attractive in any country.

Our conversation and examination of books delayed us until the honourable lawyer entered his study. Upon being introduced to him, his manly and dignified bearing came up to every thing I had imagined of a man of his character. He had a round full bust, full face, eyes that sparkled with genius, high forehead, a little bald; his stature was about the common height. I conversed with him on the subject of legal business, for which he positively refused any remuneration. He gave me written instructions how to proceed, and requested that I should let him immediately know, if I required future aid.

He informed me, through Mr. S., who acted as our mutual interpreter, that he was studying the English language, and showed me a copy of Marshall's Life of Washington, and the Federalist, in English. He said he was desirous of knowing what was the best history of the United States, and I had the mortification of replying that there were none of the many histories of the country considered the best, and that its history was yet imbedded in the archives of the United States papers, as well as the lives of the prominent men. I told him, that so far as I was informed, the future historian had to bear off the palm of having written the best history of the Union. He seemed very desirous of obtaining information of my country, and asked me many questions appertaining to it. The evening having been consumed at Señ. Don Fernando's, my visit to the Governor was deferred until the next morning.

That night, after my return to my quarters, the keeper of the meson gave me warning of the *Alicrans*, a species of scorpion, and how to elude their sting. The lodger must, previous to his reposing, tuck all the bed clothing under the mattress of his cartera, so that none of them may touch the floor for the venomous reptile to crawl upon. No portion of the bed must touch the walls of the room, and the individual must sleep with his entire head and body covered, to prevent the fall of the insect from the ceiling.

The alicran is of a reddish complexion, and about the size and shape of a small lizard. Its legs are like those of a spider, and at the point of its tail is a short curved sting, not longer than that of a bee. No sooner does he touch a human being, than he hooks him with this poisonous weapon, always fatal, at Durango, to children, and most painfully distressing to grown persons; producing a delirium, and violent spasmodic affections, with frothing at the mouth. The alicran is more poisonous at Durango than in any other portion of Mexico. This fact cannot be attributed to any

known cause, unless it should be from the mineral of the earth it lives in.

I was informed that there are families in Durango, who make their subsistence by catching these insects, the government paying them a premium for each one destroyed. After night the alicran catcher passes along the street with a torch in his hand, and the little reptile runs out of his crevice, attracted by the light; but he no sooner appears, than he is struck from the wall by a brush, and as soon as he touches the pavement, a handful of sand is thrown upon him, when the expert catcher dexterously picks him up and extracts his sting; after which he deposits him in a bottle alive, and receives his reward from the proper authority. Citizens, who wish it, have to pay extra for the search of their rooms.

On the 12th instant, I had the honour of being presented to Cesmo Sir Gobernador y Commandant General D Jose Antonio Heridia. The governor was a fine looking, intelligent gentleman, and received me with much courtesy. I did myself, on this occasion, the distinction of showing the general an American uniform. After some conversation, I retired, leaving him uninterrupted in his multifarious public duties. From the government house I went to that of Mr. John Belden, an American, of the city of New York, who had invited me to dine with him that day. Mr. B. had been successful in business, and had accumulated a large fortune; and whether or not to please himself or the Mexicans, I cannot say, he often wore costly diamond jewels, and hence he was called the Prince of Diamonds.

The people of the city of Durango, both foreign and native, seemed to be of a better order than any others I had seen in all Mexico. This, possibly might result from the circumstance of having such men as Ramires residing amongst them. The Bishop of Durango, also, was the only pious man that I heard of during all my travels in that

country. His name, I regret to say, has been lost with others from among my papers.

This celebrated and beloved Bishop is said to be truly religious. I was informed by a distinguished citizen that, sacred to his vow, he never had a female to enter his house, and that all of his servants were men; a fact unknown in relation to any other clergyman in the country. His father confessor accompanied him on every occasion, and regularly, three times a day, he made confession.

The Bishop was a man of deep sympathies and sensibilities, which was evinced by his grief at the death of an American, J. V. Crannell, M. D., for whom he had a high regard. It is said that the good man sat daily by the bedside of the doctor, and, upon his decease, gave special directions for his funeral ceremonies. I was informed they were very splendid, and it required two days to do the honours to the dead. The worthy Bishop did not himself, however, partake of this ostentation; but, with great distress, for thirty days confined himself to his room, suffering no one but his confessor to come into his presence. The pious man is much respected, and feared by his clergy and laity. The priests, on the other hand, take good care to buy indulgences to live with their unmarried wives. It should not be astonishing that, with such highly honourable men as Ramires, and the Christian Bishop, the morals and manners of a community should be improved.

At Durango there is one college, having foreign and native professors. The public school system, as regulated by law in the department, I very much admired, as being the only one perhaps by which to compel education upon the people. They are taxed for the support of the schools, upon the more perfect plan of the Prussian district system, and it is made the imperative duty of every teacher to report to the Alcalde each parent or guardian, who has children of six years of age and upwards, who neglects to send them to school.

The parent or guardian, as the case may be, is then summoned to appear before the court, to show good cause why he does not send his children to school; and, failing to do so, is fined, or punished by imprisonment, until his child is permitted to enjoy its privilege and natural right. Would that the laws of some of the States of the Union would thus compel unkind parents to educate their offspring, who are provided for by the law of the land, but are refused the boon by hard-hearted and unnatural parents.

My stay in the city of Durango was but four days, when much to my regret I had to exchange my American dress for the Mexican *jaceti*, a roundabout jacket. Long-tailed or frock coats are never worn, excepting at the capital, or by foreigners; and, as a gentleman informed me, if a man should be seen riding in any other apparel than that of a jaceti and leather pants, he would be looked upon as a monster, and accordingly almost stoned to death. It is very important to conform to Mexican costume, both to gratify Mexican vanity, as also to disguise yourself as a native, for the traveller cannot know when he may hear the exclamation, "Death to all foreigners!" The handy and comfortable little jacket I did not at all regard, but it was the heavy weight of iron and steel with which I was obliged to encumber myself and saddle; for to my belt was a powder-flask, a bag of bullets, two six and one single barrel pistols, a bowie-knife and a sword; while looped to the horn of my saddle was a double-barrel gun, holsters with two pistols, and my nine inch barrel rifle pistol, hanging to my right, on the skirt of my saddle.

Such a formidable display of weapons might appear savage and intently bad in any other country, but such are the customs of Mexico; and notwithstanding I fell short of the full complement of twenty-six rounds; yet, as it was my intention never to surrender "like a gentleman," as the ladrones have it, I felt desirous to be as well prepared for battle as the best of them; or, as my interpreter often expressed

himself, "it looked so respectable, for a Mexican would never deign to take his hat off to a traveller unarmed."

As in the journey before me I should be often obliged to *bivouac* in the open air, I had provided myself with a tent, as also an additional supply of London pickled salmon, and ham, crackers and jerked beef. At Durango I was advised to employ a guide, as no one could find the way to Canales, excepting those who had travelled the mountains. I did not discharge my interpreter here, for the reason that I found no serious complaint to lodge against him, and for fear that in an exchange I might not obtain a better one.

The governor of Durango having furnished me with letters to the Alcalde of Canales, and the prefect of Tamazula, recommending them to forward me in all of my designs, and all other necessary preparations having been made, I gave the order, *bamanos*, (let us go,) a word always used for the signal of departure, and took up my line of march to Cacario. My friend, Mr. Stalknit, had at that time despatched ten loads of silver for Mazatlan, and I was recommended to join company with the conductor of it, which I did; and although his men were all armed well, with the exception of a boy, who carried a gun without a lock, yet I cannot say that I considered it altogether prudent; for, while I might be of assistance to him, the money he had in charge was a superinducement for the attack of marauding parties.

While at Durango, the two brothers, Stalknits, invited me to a ride of two miles in the country, to visit their cotton factory. The buildings of their establishment were as commodious as any others I had seen of the kind in the Union, working twenty thousand spindles, and their complement of looms. The yarns of the factory were all wove into fabrics, with the exception of thread for sewing purposes. The conductors of the manufacturing department were all New Englanders.

A young lady who had been engaged at that factory for

the last six years was desirous of returning home, and requested that if I should again take Durango in my way to the United States, that I should be her protector! My gallantry would not permit me to refuse, and I assured her that it would be a pleasure to me to play the part of knight-errant on her dangerous voyage home.

The wife of the principal superintendent, a lady of much intelligence, seemed to be very desirous of visiting her native country. She was a woman who had seen trouble, for she informed me that the only infant of her bosom, of two years of age, upon having departed this life, was refused the rites of burial, for the reason of its not having received Catholic baptism; which fact I do not consider egregious, as the creeds of some of the Protestant denominations deny to children admittance into heaven under any circumstances; when Christ himself has said, "Suffer little children to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven." But I will not dispute with priests. I will rather take the word of God, for I believe in the doctrine, "Let every man be a liar, so God be true."

The infant was preserved in a lead coffin, and deposited under her bed, until the period should arrive when she should lay it by the side of her kindred.

CHAPTER XVII.

Journey commenced. Camino Real. Cacario. Dining and sleeping. Separation from the conductor. Splendid view of the valley Guatemepe. Animals feeding on the plain. Distances on the table-land deceiving. Despatched my guide to secure lodgings. Countess of Guatemepe. Her hospitality. Prayers and a dance. Departure for Chinacates. Indian news. Dissatisfaction with my interpreter. My guide's rebellion. Disagreeable journey. Arrival at Chinacates. Six-barrel pistols. Ridge of the mountain. Conversed with an Englishman. Mexican artizans. A New Englander. Disgraceful transaction. Santa Argo. Indians committing depredations. Reflections. Solicitude for my men. Conversation with my interpreter. San Dilla. An old Mexican account of the Indians. Excitement in the village. My servant Marcelino. Advice of friends. My own deportment. Several small villages. Two mountains. Want of men at Catarine. Indians who had killed many travellers. Six mules loaded with dead men. Boca the mouth. Notice not to proceed farther. Some days delay at the Boca. Departure from the Boca. Madre Montes. Separation from company. Bivouac. Battle at night. March for Canales. Recovered from injuries. Battle in the day. Death of an Indian. None of my men killed. Pursued my journey. Mountain scenery and travelling. Early history of the country. Frost. Reach Canales. Curiosities and freaks of nature. The Madre Montes. Despatched my guide to engage lodgings. Disappointment. Stake my tent. My interpreter complains. His suspicions. Proposition to me. My refusal. Buckled on my belt. Fell asleep. Marcelino. The ascent of the next mountain. Dreadful suspicion of my interpreter. Stupendous scenes of nature. White bear. A mountain that overlooked the others. Like Balboa beheld the Pacific. Extensive sublimity. Distant view of Canales. Two little boys. Departed brother.

My journey, or trouble, I would rather say, was commenced on the 15th inst., by crossing first a low rocky mountain, and then another of no better travelling condition, which consumed one half of the day. When we landed upon the plain of Cacario, I found it to be so perfectly level, that the *camino real*, (the principal road,) was often, for a mile at a time, full of water; while the land generally was boggy. At one o'clock, under a large cotton-wood tree, that stood in the midst of the plain, I stopped to "noon it."

While partaking of some refreshments I despatched Marcelino to a rancho close by for water, but on the way his animal was bogged, and it was with difficulty extricated. But what was of more serious distress to me was, that in the catastrophe my servant broke one of two bottles of brandy I had purchased at Durango, at the dear rate of two

dollars each. The brandy I expected to have found a restorative in my moments of excessive thirst and fatigue, as also a pleasant médicine in times of indisposition—but as the old adage has it—"there is many a slip between the cup and the lip." It was not until after sun-down that I arrived at the meson of the Hacienda campus Cacario. The conductor reached our quarters first, and upon my dismounting, I was glad to see that dinner was in preparation. After we had satisfied our hunger we commenced preparing for sleep. As there were no seats in our room, bags of money supplied their places, but my cartera being made up, I soon stretched myself upon it, whilst the old conductor extended himself across the only door in the room.

The following morning we made an early start, and about mid-day, having arrived at a high rolling country, the conductor and myself parted; my having to take the right-hand, for Guatemepé, while he turned to the left. After travelling until about three o'clock, over a low mountainous region, we hove in view of a level country, which, for the extent of landscape, and lake-scenery, was as sublime in appearance as the valley of Mexico.

To our right, a lake for many miles skirted the mountain, having arms of water jutting from the main surface, like bays from a miniature sea; while far in the plain, at some ten or twelve miles in distance, sat the casa grande, and the ranchos of the hacienda campus of Guatemepé.

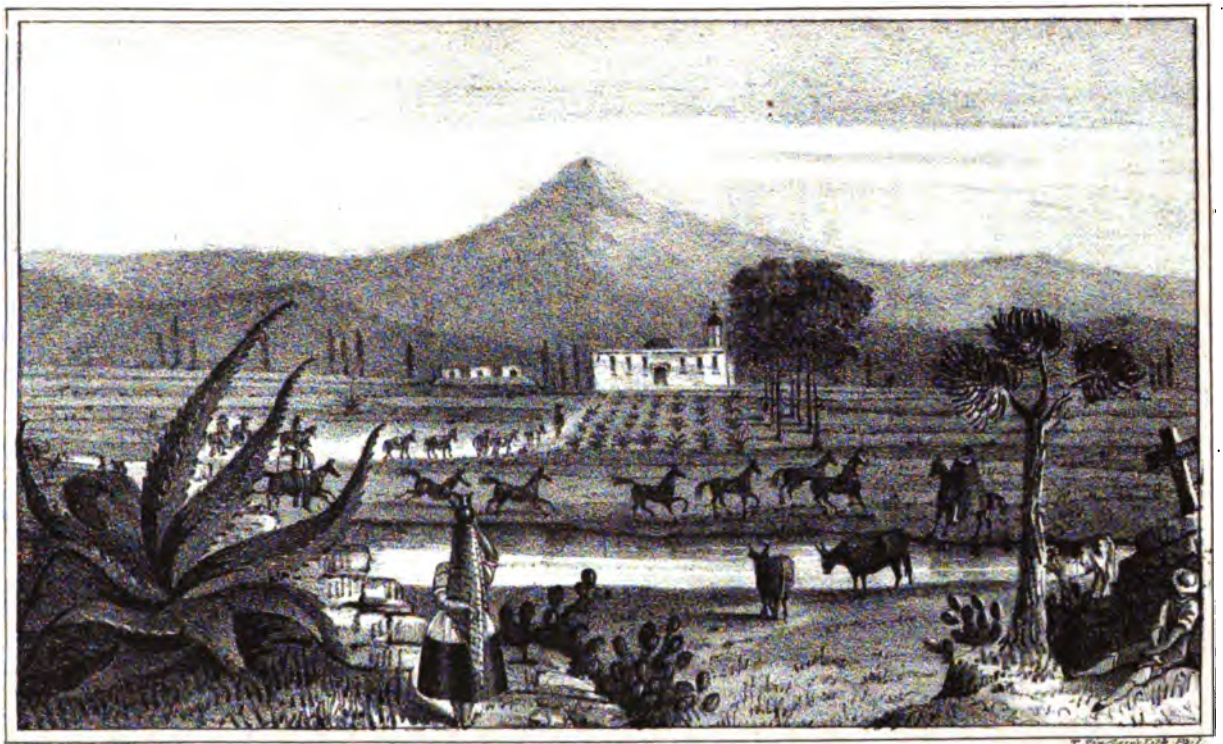
For a season I enjoyed the prospect of hundreds of animals feeding upon the plain, and drinking the water of the lake: but the desire of resting from the toils of the day urged me forward to reach the great house, where I might indulge in sweet repose. And so anxious did I become, with my quarters in sight, that it did seem that the more I travelled the less I approached the object of my mark, as if deluded by enchantment. Distance, upon the table-lands of Mexico, is as deceiving, if not more so, as upon water. The highly rarified state of the atmosphere, in the

elevated regions of country enables the beholder to see with a distinctness objects that are far remote, in a manner unknown in the latitudes of the United States. Travellers, who are careful of their eyes, upon the plains wear goggles, to prevent the continued strain of looking through the vast space, as well as to break the force of the periodical south-west winds, as also the rays and reflection of the sun.

At a proper period, I despatched my guide to secure me lodgings, to the Conde of Guatemepé, for I had no idea of stopping at the ranchos if I could help myself to better accommodations. As I approached the house, my servant returned and informed me that the countess had refused to receive me, owing to her lord being from home, and could not entertain company: however, in another moment, I received a messenger who said that his mistress had consented, as an especial favour, that I should put up at her casa grande. I have before used the titles of nobility common in Mexico, and here I will remark, once for all, that they are now only applied as a courteous compliment, and not as a matter of right.

Wealth, in Mexico, is sufficiently respectable and powerful, without the dignity of names, bestowed on her former nobles. The countess was a lovely and hospitable woman, of between twenty and thirty years of age. She furnished me with a handsome apartment, where I feasted upon the good things of my own store and her supplies. There was other company at the castle besides myself, and, at the tolling of the oration, by the bell of the church, which was a part of the same building, prayers were said, and then the guitar and a dance were introduced, which lasted until eleven o'clock, when all retired to rest.

From Guatemepé I resumed my journey on the following morning for Chinacates, distant about forty miles. My direction, the most of the day, was over a continued range of low mountains, leaving the great and extensive valley of Guatemepé to the right. For several minor reasons, I had



On Stone by T. Millington

T. Sinclair's Lith. Phil.

VIEW OF THE HACIENDA IN THE VALLEY OF GWATAMAPA.

from the time of my departure from Durango, become dissatisfied with my interpreter; but I said nothing to him until I had some strong suspicions of the unfriendly intentions of the man. I had been informed that, at a distance of two or three days' ride from Guatemepé, a hard battle had been fought between a party of five hundred Camanche Indians and a thousand Mexicans, the latter being defeated. This intelligence, I was of the opinion, my interpreter was turning to an account injurious to the advance of my journey; for he had imparted it to my servants, and would himself, every cross we came to by the sides of the road,—which, the reader must recollect, were erected over murdered persons,—shout aloud, *Los Indios!*—(The Indians!)

Discovering that his exclamations had an undesirable effect upon my men, I remarked to him, that I was sensible that I was surrounded with danger, but if he persisted in alarming my servants, which might result in their desertion, he might return to Durango, or take any other direction he chose, for I believed his course of conduct to be prejudicial to me. He insisted that he was entirely innocent of an intention of harm, and implored that I would forgive the indiscretion, and think no more of it. He knew as well as I did that, if I discharged him, I could not employ another interpreter, for my last chance had escaped me, and that I must need one in future more than ever. I expressed myself satisfied, but took care to watch and divine, if I could, his every action.

My guide became rebellious, and would stop and have long conversations with every one whom he met. This conduct I had been advised by all of my friends to prohibit, but so excited had the man's mind become, that it was impossible to make him desist.

Thus my disagreeable journey was continued the whole day, until my arrival at Chinacates, a rancho belonging to the estate of the Conde of Guatemepé. I dismounted at the house of the administrador before sunset. The governor

was from home, but his wife came to the door and invited me in, which I did, and, to my great astonishment, after I had become seated on the bench behind the long table, she took from a box a six-barreled pistol, the only one that I had seen in the country, besides my own, and walked across the floor. I drew from my belt my pair of similar weapons and laid them upon the table, so that she might behold also that I had twelve shots, which had a desirable effect; for she appeared no sooner to discover them than she laid aside her own. The woman, I knew, did not intend hostility, but as that part of the country was very much infested with marauding land-pirates, she had ever been accustomed to be prepared to meet the worst. However, the husband soon arrived, and I fared well.

My ride, the next day, was mostly upon a ridge of a mountain, which would, at times, bring me in view of the great valley of Guatemepé. No incident worthy of remark happened during the day, saving that, on one occasion, I was interrogated, in my mother-tongue, if I was a foreigner, and, upon replying in the affirmative, I had the pleasure of conversing with an Englishman. Having exchanged intelligence from the different points of our journey, we cordially took leave, as if each of us had been old acquaintances. It was Sunday, and, at the hour of four o'clock, P. M., I was safely lodged in the town of Santa Argo.

Santa Argo has mines, and is situated upon what is called the Santa Argo river. The mines are not now worked, for the reason of the poverty of the ore. The attention of an enterprising Mexican company has, at that place, been directed to the manufacturing of cotton, and I was credibly informed by the superintendent of the factory, the company had borrowed their capital, and were enabled to make a handsome profit, paying thirty-seven and a half per cent. upon the loan.

Thus it can easily be perceived, how dearly the Mexicans have to pay for cotton fabrics—so much for protection

and home markets! The New Englander related to me what the swindler would call a smart, but to others a disgraceful account of a Mexican gentleman of Saltila, who having determined to go into the cotton manufacturing business, visited the factories of the United States, for the purpose of securing perfect machinery. Upon his arrival he made, through a merchant, as his broker, a purchase of a cotton factory machine, at the cost of twenty thousand dollars, and had it shipped to his home. He also engaged an American artisan to go to Saltila, and put it together. But all having arrived, upon examination, it was discovered that no two wheels of the whole fabrication belonged to one another, being all mismatched, some too large and others too small, like the cannon balls that were too great for their guns, not a wheel could be turned, nor a shot fired. Thus, while the Mexican character falls short of correctness, it is nevertheless taken advantage of sometimes. Still it is to be hoped that the twenty thousand has never done the swindler any good.

The Mexicans are very ingenious and apt artisans, acquiring with much celerity the skill of any of the mechanical branches. They never serve the long apprenticeships, that are so common in the Union and in Europe; but having worked at a trade some one or two years, they think themselves sufficiently proficient to carry it on; and thus quit their tutor and set up for themselves.

Indeed it is but seldom, generally in Mexico, the mechanic has ever received a day's instruction in his particular trade; but of himself, dependant alone upon the force of his genius and invention, transacts his peculiar business to the satisfaction of his customers.

Like the Chinese, the Mexicans have a good imitative capacity, and make any thing by pattern very tolerably. It is a part of the accomplishments of a gentleman to know how to shoe a horse or mule; and all, when they travel, take with them an assortment of shoes and nails, so that if it

should become necessary to shoe an animal, a shoe is selected and nailed on. The buttress is never used, for a horse is never shod until his feet become tender, or he has to travel in the rainy season. Hence it is that mechanics, who emigrate to Mexico, do not prosper well, excepting in some of the large cities, for the lazarones all profess to be good bricklayers, carpenters, tailors, saddlers, watchmakers and shoemakers; while the blacksmith only finds his art profitable to him in large factories.

My journey on the next day was one of much vexation. My servants had learned at Santa Argo, that the Indians had, after the battle spoken of, scattered, and were committing depredations in every direction. For the life of me I could hardly keep them together, for they would spur up to every individual they saw, to make inquiries of them respecting "los Indios." My interpreter, in the midst of my difficulties, utterly disgusted me by his apparent want of confidence. It is true, that to have been attacked by Indians would have been an unpleasant reflection, yet it was no less so, that we were momentarily hazarding battle from Mexicans; and I was persuaded, that if there was any correctness in the Indian intelligenoe, my travelling was rendered the more safe, for the dreaded Indians would only drive home the ladrones, and my chances would be lessened for a rencounter, in having none but the Camanches for my enemies, and I looked upon them as the lesser evil of the two.

There were other reflections to prevent my retreat, for I considered that by it I would gain nothing but delay, without bettering my condition; and at any future period my dangers would be no less, and, if battle from Indians or Mexicans was to overtake me, I felt determined to meet it, and abide the result,—for "I had set my life upon a cast, and would stand the hazard of the die."

I felt much uneasiness on account of my men, for fear that their resolution might falter, and they positively refuse

to proceed farther, or cause expensive delays, which latter I had every reason to believe, was the intention of my interpreter. At all hazards I was determined to travel to the Boca, two days' journey from San Argo,—for at that point, I was informed, travellers would rendezvous and depart thence in large parties. My interpreter declared that he would do more for me than for any other person alive, but he abhorred the idea of an Indian scalping-knife,—and that, as for himself, he would prefer a death-bed scene, to one on the mountains or the plains.

I did not believe that the man was a coward, but that he had other views in his silly conversation, and I felt perplexed with difficulties. My interpreter was a peculiar man. He had a solemn and melancholy countenance. His often meditative dejection evidently showed that he had deep thoughts brooding in his breast,—whether they were those of sadness, or his expression of melancholy was caught from the people he resided so long amongst, or the unfriendly buffetings of the world, I could not divine—and I felt tempted to probe him.

The more easily to effect my purpose, I inquired of him, if he desired to return with me to the United States? His reply was, that he felt satisfied with Mexico, and might, perhaps, at some future period, visit the Union. I was not satisfied with this evasive answer, and commenced describing the facilities of travelling, the improvements, the comforts, wealth and prosperity in every part of the United States; when he interrupted me by asking if I had seen the city of ——. I informed him that two years had hardly passed away since I had spent some months in the place named, and commenced describing it,—he wept. I explained to him the flourishing condition of religion in the Union. I told him that the numerous denominations were, in one common unison, quietly enjoying the freedom of conscience and the worship of their God. He replied that he did not believe there was a God, and that, if

he had had faith, he might not have been with me on that day. He added, that, as a matter of course, he had joined the church of Mexico—but the clergy proving to be the most immoral people he had ever known, he felt confirmed in his original opinions.

This conversation needs no comment, for it was evident that I had obtained the object of my investigation—the man was a refugee from justice.

At about one o'clock we arrived at a village called San Dilla. The doors of the houses were all closed, and I saw but one wretched old man sitting in the shade, who said that an Indian had, on that morning, been seen on the top of the mountain overlooking the town, and had fired a rifle, the bullet striking upon a house-top. This was the reason, he stated, for the houses being closed, the better to save the lives and property of the inhabitants. He remarked further, that for himself he had lived long enough, and had no property to lose.

Enough had been told, and my men all dismounted, and I followed their example, with the hope, that by the following morning their fears would be quieted. The noise of our arrival, and our knocking at a door for admittance, had the effect, it seemed, of waking the inhabitants from their slumbers. The news soon spread through the village, and I could hear from every quarter, "los Americanos." It was not long before a well dressed young man came and invited myself and my interpreter to partake of some refreshments at his house.

On the morning of the 21st inst., I gave directions for our departure from San Dilla, but my interpreter began making objections, which I silenced by positively commanding them to be made. All appeared reluctantly to obey, and we commenced our march. My situation was one of the most unpleasant and delicate imaginable. I was shut out from conversation, which entirely placed me under the dominion of my interpreter; as so far from his attempting to

diminish the fears of my men, and stimulate them to action, it appeared that he only encouraged them in their evil forebodings.

However, I was not without some comfort, for Providence rarely deserts an individual entirely destitute of friends. My principal servant Marcelino seemed to pay me more marked attention, and appeared to be solicitous for my welfare. I noticed that he would often cast a watchful eye around to my interpreter and myself, taking occasion to pat his breast with his left hand, (which in Mexico signifies bravery,) to assure me of his firmness. I was satisfied that he was courageous, for his deportment had ever convinced me, that he was both honest in his intentions and firm at heart.

Yet, to counterbalance these good impressions, my best friends in the country, who, while they unhesitatingly expressed their doubts of the success of my journey, had particularly advised me, that when servants became the most attentive, it was then that danger was to be apprehended; for a conspiracy was evidently formed against the master.

The attentions of Marcelino were, nevertheless, grateful to me, and I could not but conclude that his motives, under all the circumstances, were pure; and that he was the only friend and advocate I had in the number of all my men. My own deportment was difficult to maintain; having to stimulate Marcelino by my confidence, while at the same time it was necessary in many ways to express my distrust of the others, including particularly my interpreter. I did not intend to quarrel with the latter right out; for if things so far lost their balance, I would, if no other chance of safety offered, be sure of obtaining the first shot. Besides I was desirous to make him useful to me in a trying moment, when any interpreter would be better than none.

My journey on this day was immediately up the banks of the same stream, upon which the town of Santa Argo is situated. Its course was between two mountains, which

appeared rapidly to converge as we advanced. We passed several villages all of which seemed to be in a state of excitement.

At Santa Catarine I met with forty men, who were equipping themselves for an excursion in the mountains, to hunt a small party of Indians, who had within the last few days killed many travellers; and between that town and the Boca I met six mules, each loaded with the melancholy freight of a dead man. The bodies were those of a lawyer of Durango, who was on his way to Culiacan to be married; two others were young doctors, who had accompanied him to wait upon him in his anticipated joyous occasion; the other three were servants. They had come to their end mostly by Indian arrows, the body of the lawyer having six sticking in it, besides having the flesh of his throat cut away.

Late in the evening we arrived at the town of the Boca, situated immediately in the point where the eastern mountain joined the western one. Most appropriately had the village received its name, for in English it signified the mouth, and it was in fact the mouth of the great valley of Guatemepé.

I felt rejoiced in overcoming the many difficulties on my way to this place; for I had been advised by my countryman of Santa Argo, if Indians were talked of on the way, not to stop short of the Boca. The Alcalde gave me notice not to proceed farther without strengthening my party, or waiting for another company, and thus my progress was conditionally impeded. My journey to Canales would be one hundred and ninety miles, across the Madre Monte, the mother mountain; so called by reason of the vast piles of mountains thrown together, which are not found in any other part of the country. The Mexicans say the Madre Monte is the parent of the Cordilleras and the Rocky Mountains.

I was delayed some days at the Boca, to recruit the number of my company, which was accomplished by the arrival of some more travellers. On the 26th instant, I depart-

ed from the Boca, (one of my servants having deserted me,) with a party of twenty men and about one hundred animals. As the way over the mountains was only a narrow path, winding along the sides of precipices and heights, just admitting the passage of one mule with his rider, or pack, at a time, we became scattered during the first and second day's toil, and our independent companies separated; for the drivers could not attend to the general interest, the animals of their masters engrossing their attention severally. It was with great difficulty they could be managed; consequently our whole strength did not encamp together.

On the 28th instant, the parties both front and rear had not been seen by us for several hours, and Marcelino expressed his apprehensions that we would neither find grass nor water for that night, the animals having to find their own livings, as provender cannot be packed for them.

It was not long, however, before a place was found where all our wants could be abundantly supplied, and we did not hesitate to bivouac there. I had always been accustomed to read and hear of Indian fights, and no sooner were our mules turned loose, and our meal was over, than I directed the men all to select their places at a distance from the burning fires, where they should sleep, and examine well the ground, so that in case of an attack mistakes might not be made, of friends for enemies.

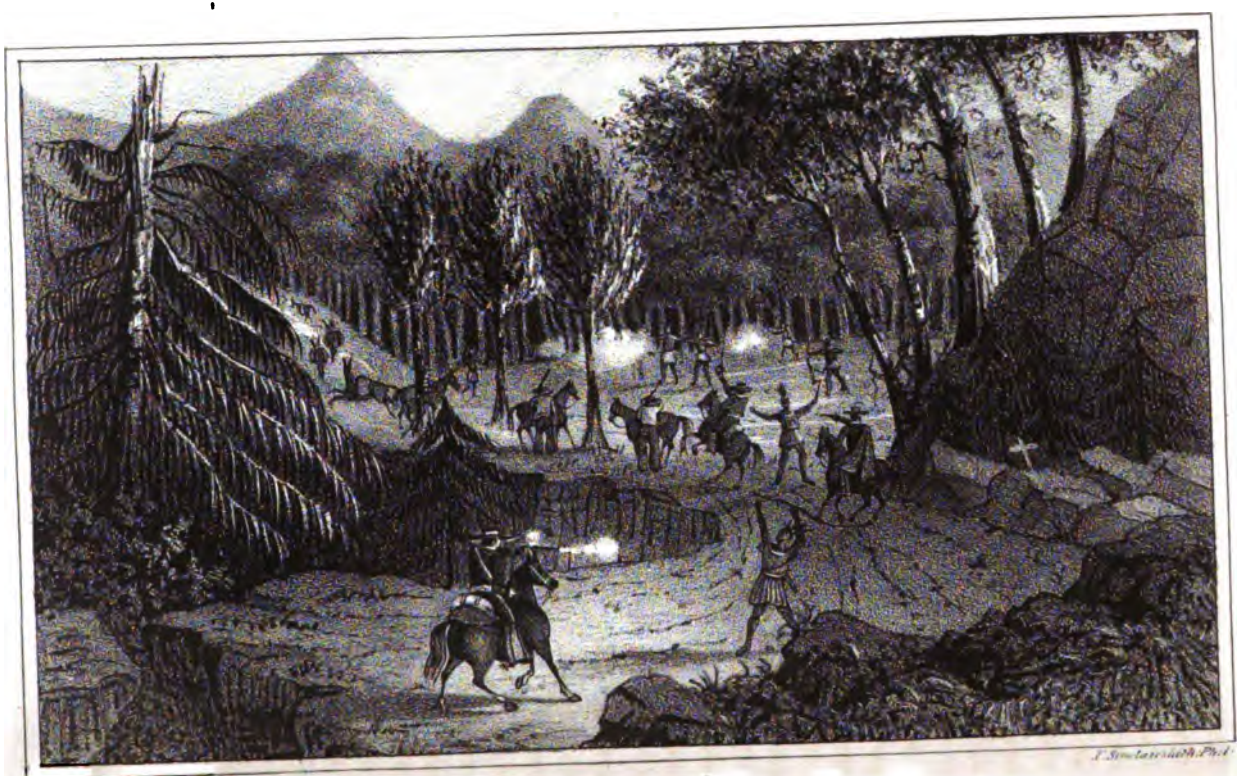
My order having been obeyed, at the hour of dark each one reposed at his well-known chosen spot, while arms and ammunition were all put in readiness for battle at any moment. It proved to be well that I had taken these precautions; for, between the hours of two and three o'clock at night, we were attacked by a party of either Mexicans or Camanche Indians, or perhaps of both; for they frequently unite for purposes of plunder. Judging from the reports of their guns, our enemies were about twelve in number, while my own men consisted of the interpreter and four servants.

Upon the first alarm being given by the shrill whistles

and soul-shrinking yells of the savages, my men all stood up to the tree, or rock, against which they had been laying, and returned the fire of the enemy like brave men. This random firing seemed to last for about one hour, when the Indians left us in possession of our camp.

On the following morning no dead nor wounded savages were to be found. Two of my men were wounded, and I sustained a further loss by one of my mules being missing; and had they not all fortunately been hobbled, the action of the night would have produced a stampedo by which I would have been left destitute. No sooner had the sun dawned than we were all mounted, and with my three remaining pack-mules I commenced my line of march for Canales. There was no retreat, and my readers may depend upon it every one of us, as the saying is, "kept his eye skinned," looking every moment for Indians. About one o'clock, P. M., as we ascended a mountain height, where there was some level land, thickly wooded and very rocky, we were suddenly brought to a halt by a shower of arrows from Indian bows. We had nothing to do but fight, and my party scattered; some dismounted and stood behind their animals, while others kept their seats on their saddles. As for myself, (unless I chose to follow the example of the man who was a little lame,) I determined to take my chance upon mule-back; for, added to my Zacatecas injuries, I had not yet recovered from a stage upset, upon Mount Airy, Va., about twelve months previous.

My men commenced a brisk fire from their several positions. I could occasionally discover the huge body of an Indian, who was not prudent enough to conceal himself, and took two deliberate shots at him, which seemed to have no other effect than to knock fragments from around him, with my double-barreled gun. I then resolved to try what effect a bullet from my long rifle-barreled pistol would have upon his head. Having, with deliberate aim, pulled the trigger, the long barrel told well the tale. By this time my favour-



On Stone by T. Addington

BATTLE WITH THE INDIANS ON THE MADRE MONTE.

ite servant, who had never left my side, seeing the big Indian fall, became furious for battle; and my eyes catching a glimpse of his long sword, I immediately gave the order, "Charge! Charge!" My interpreter, true to his duty, reiterated, "*Carga! Carga!*" which was no sooner heard than every soul was seated in his horned saddle, and with one accord the huge Spanish spurs were driven into the side of our animals.

With all the enthusiasm of Indian fighting, we in our turn raised the shout and the war-cry, and by an energetic movement drove the enemy before us. It being impossible to chase far an Indian foe, over rocks and mountain cliffs, I considered present safety better than complete victory, and accordingly called off my men.

Upon examining the big Indian, I found that he wore a wooden mask, having a long red tongue hanging from its mouth, besides many serpents and horns nodding and dodging from the top of his head and round his shoulders. His leather clothing was stuffed with moss, such as is used in the United States for filling the cushions of sofas and mattresses. None of my men were injured. I had an arrow to pass through my hat, and two through my Mexican blanket, at the horn of my saddle. These Indians had notched two arrows at a time, and are generally reputed to be very certain of their aim. A battle with arrows is of course noiseless.

Mounted on my little mule I continued to pursue my journey. It is not considered safe to travel on any other animal over these mountains, as the mules are very sure-footed and sagacious; often having to make a delicate step, or jump, on a craggy steep; in which case he will, with great sagacity, pause and balance himself, apparently to feel if his rider is firmly seated; and then, as quick as thought, he makes the bound which lands his feet on the opposite rock; a slip from which would inevitably have precipitated both man and beast down a deep and craggy vortex.

To give some idea of the height of the Madre Monte, I will remark that the traveller is often obliged to consume the whole day in ascending a mountain; which when overcome, to his astonishment he beholds that upon the supremacy of heights, as he had imagined the one he has just ascended, he has but to commence another arduous and giddy task of reaching an eminence, perhaps greater than the other. And what overpowered my philosophy was, that the tops and the glens of these mountains, many thousand feet above the level of the plains, abounded in water, and I have been informed that some of these heights are covered with bog, while a well cannot be sunk deep enough in the plains to obtain water.

The abundance of water is the only difficulty to be contended with in mining upon the mountains, while at the same time there is nothing so needed on the plains below as the liquid element. From such experience in Mexico I am forced to look upon that country as a natural paradox. It is—and it is not—a contradiction in humanity, religion and nature. When the mind of the traveller resorts to the early history of the country, and beholds the formidable natural barriers which the Spaniards had to overcome, he is astonished at the remarkable rapidity with which the aborigines were subdued. The spirit of discovery and of conquest once kindled, the romantic excitement it produced was overpowering, and with an enthusiasm which nothing but a like cause could engender, and an avarice never to be satiated—the Spaniards swept over plain and mountain with an irresistible power, and subdued a continent, the dominion of which extended to the limits of Cancer on the north, and Capricorn on the south.

On this night I bivouaced on a greater elevation than I had before done, and on the next morning I had the pleasure to behold a fine frost, with which my blankets were covered. It was the only one I had seen in the country, and I could not withhold the temptation of touching it with

CURIOSITY OF A MAN'S HAND ON THE PEAK OF A MOUNTAIN .

my fingers, and cooling my hands with the white dew of heaven. It was, however, short lived, but as long as it lasted I could not take my eyes from the pure sight, or suppress the thoughts of my own native hills of Virginia.

My guide informed me that I could, on that day, reach Caneles, and the cheering news seemed to animate my whole party with the thoughts, that one more ride would put us beyond the danger of Indians, and into an inhabited country. Shortly after we set out, we had to ascend a mountain, which brought us in view of a snow-capped peak which reached far above any other point. Having descended the opposite side, we travelled along the bed of a river for some four or five miles. The stream was shut up between two mountains, whose rocky and precipitous heights prohibited a pathway along its sides. Many were the curiosities, and the freaks of nature that I beheld in the singular formations of the rocks. On the top of a high point on one of these mountains was a flat rock, just the shape of a man's hand, which sat upright on a wrist. The mammoth hand could not have been less than one hundred feet in height. It appeared to point due north and south, as if to prevent the traveller, who was confined between these wild and rugged barriers, from becoming bewildered, and thus lose his proper direction. All the rock of the mountains seemed to be of a rotten lime and sandstone order.

The Madre Monte is a vast mountain, having hundreds of smaller ones piled upon her broad bosom. By a perception of the imagination she seems in sportive magnificence to fondle and cherish her nestlings at the bleached and pure white nipple of her breast.

We travelled on that day over a continuous range of mountains. The day was drawing to a close, and yet Caneles did not appear. My men were all gay—now singing merrily and then vauntingly yelling the Indian war-whoop. In the evening I despatched my guide forward to engage me rooms at a meson in town. He had been absent

about two hours, when at sunset we overtook him on the top of a mountain. His countenance seemed so dejected that I began to apprehend some calamity. However, I was soon undeceived by his informing me that he had been mistaken in his calculation, and that it would not be until the following day that we could reach Caneles.

On receiving this unwelcome intelligence, we hastened down the mountain, by which time darkness overtook us. We dismounted and kindled our fire, and unpacked the animals. I caused lights to be set around the ground in different directions, so that I was enabled to review all immediately about us. We were on a wet place with a soft soil. There was just level space enough to stake my tent, for the first time since it had been in my possession. My cartera also I had determined to sleep on that night, for the only time since I had been in the mountains, as a prudential step for the preservation of my health; and accordingly gave directions for the work to be done.

My interpreter complained much of my guide, expressing his want of confidence in him, saying, that he should not be surprised if he was in league with a marauding party for our destruction, by his deceiving us on that day. I endeavoured to quiet the man's fears, by saying that I believed him innocent of any bad intentions, and told him that mistakes were common to every person, and that it was evidently as much his interest to take us to Caneles, as it was our own to get there.

My tent pitched, and my cartera erected, I, for the first time in four days and nights, took off my belt of arms, and laid it on the common pile of weapons at the mouth of the *marquee*. My servants busily engaged themselves in preparing dinner. While they were thus employed at the fire, a little distance from the tent, my interpreter gravely approached me, and said that he confidently believed we would be attacked that night, and he felt desirous to make a proposition to me, which was, that he and I should leave

the camp and lay upon the way side, to attack the Indians when they would be stealing upon us. I replied that I should rest myself that night, though the mountains should be covered with howling devils, threatening to devour me alive.

He was meditative a short time, and again remarked, that as I was unwilling to accompany him, and he did not want to see me taken by surprise, as I had been on the night previous, he wished permission to adventure alone, that he might give the alarm before the enemy could storm my camp. A thought at the moment gleamed through my mind, and I resolutely informed him, that he might leave as soon as he liked, but that all the arms in the camp belonged to me, and that he should carry none of them with him. Suiting the action to the word, I stepped between him and the weapons. The interpreter instantly sank to the earth, as if death had overtaken him.

I raised my belt and buckled it round my person, then put my gun and holster-pistols in my cartera, and motioned to my servants to put on their arms. I noticed that the conversation and actions of the interpreter had attracted their attention, and they all obeyed me. Marcelino drew his knife, and seated himself behind the suspected man, and signified by a motion of his hand, that if he moved he would let him have it—to which I nodded assent.

With a heart and head that ached, I could eat but little. My good servant seeming to insist so much, by his signs, that I should lie down, I concluded to do so, but not to sleep. Exhausted nature, however, was supreme to my will, and I no sooner extended myself, than the world was lost to me. Marcelino awoke me in the morning before my interpreter had arisen. I had him aroused, and when chocolate was over, for fear of an attack, and thinking that, perhaps, I had judged him too harshly, I handed him back his weapons.

We commenced our day's journey by ascending the next

mountain. Having travelled some distance upon its ridge, my interpreter dropped his hat, and dismounted to pick it up. I had passed him but a short distance, when I concluded to look around. Not hearing the tread of his animal, I suddenly turned my head and discovered the man in the act of pointing his gun at me, over his saddle. I wheeled instantly, and drawing my rifle pistol, made towards him. He said that he had a second time dropped his hat, and was only in the act of mounting his horse when I saw him. I commanded him to mount, telling him, that if he dared again to get behind me, under any circumstances, it must prove fatal to one of us, and we continued our travel.

The scenes of nature through which we passed were of the most stupendous kind,—consisting of mountains, rocks, cataracts, and deep glens. The deer, the wolf, and the wild turkey inhabited the dense forests—nor was there any habitation between the Boca and where we then were. I heartily desired to see Caneles.

I was informed that there is a species of grizzly bear that lives in the clefts of these mountains. They are said to be as white, and in fact the same animal, as those found in the ice regions of the north. They are supposed to have made their way from the regions of the north, their native clime, upon the long range of the Rocky mountains. I had to admire the abundance and beauty of the game I witnessed. But my guns had not been loaded to harm them. I had no shots but for defence.

By the middle of the day we had ascended a mountain that overlooked all others in the vicinity. The air was cold, and we all drew on our serapis. My guide seemed desirous to show me some object. I inquired of my interpreter what it was. He informed me that it was the Pacific ocean.

From the position I occupied, like Nuñez de Bilboa, on the heights of the isthmus of Darien, I looked over land until it was lost in the vast immensity of misty space—the vapours

of the waters of the ocean exhibiting a marked contrast to the dry and clear atmosphere of the parched land. The sight was sublimely extensive, yet I did not enjoy the view as much as if I had been more happily conditioned.

We descended a high mountain, and my guide gave the joyful intelligence that Caneles was in sight, and pointed out the opposite height that also overlooked the town. At length we came to the brink of the mountain, which commanded the view of a vast ravine, in the bottom of which, situated upon a bold and rapid stream, is the town of Caneles.

The mountain was precipitous. We made a slow zig-zag progress, making an angle at almost every ten or twenty paces. My journey down the height, with Caneles constantly in sight, was three hours at least. And thus, upon the evening of the 28th instant, I dismounted at the house rented for me by my guide. While the sceptre of thought shall hold dominion over my mind, and when all other impressions are blotted out of my memory, I shall never forget the two little boys who came running, with tears streaming from their eyes, and exclaimed, "*Adios Teo?*" "How do you do, uncle?" I clasped them to my bosom, and wept for an only and a departed brother

CHAPTER XVIII.

My first object. An American living at Caneles. Interested with my voice. Development made by Marcelino. Mineral of Caneles. Sublime view of the scenery of Caneles. The climate of Caneles. Mountains abound with silver. Quicksilver of Caneles. Mr. John Buchan, governor of an English company. Disease of goitre. Doctor Eberle. Feelings of myself. Did not repose at Caneles. Journey down the Caneles river. View of mountain scenery. All nature in Mexico at war. Mule more sapient than a horse. The town of Topic. Planting corn Emerge from between two Cerroes. View of open space beautiful. Species of birds. Remarkable account of the love of an Indian woman. Arrived at Tamazula. President Victoria. Hospitality of the Prefect and Curate. Children of priests. Tamazula river. Umaya river. Culiacan river. Town of Cosala. Mazatalan. A voyage from China. Fish and oysters. Guadaloupe de Calvo. English silver mines. Mountains abound in silver. Mineral of Refugio. Return to the mineral of Caneles. Inhabitants of the hot and cold regions. Difference of temperature of the Pacific and Atlantic coasts. Departed from Caneles for Guanosebi. Unintelligible conversation. Met with Mr. Buchan at Guanosebi. Moon-shine in Mexico. A general, a priest, and a lawyer. Santa Anna's hacienda campus. Mexican attachment.

My first object, after my arrival at Caneles, was to refresh myself from the fatigues of travel; and accordingly, having partaken of a good dinner, I retired to my cartera, where, until the next morning, I indulged in delightful slumber, and many dreams—which was but living over again my hopes, my hazards, and my sufferings.

The 1st of March found me on my feet long before the sun had gilded the cloud-capped heights that overlooked the town. I had understood that an American lived in Caneles, and my solicitude was to see him, before my necessities would require me to transact further business through the interpreter whom I had in my employment, and whom I intended that day to discharge, regardless of all considerations.

A change of my condition was obligatory, and if I should not be bettered, my situation could be no worse, and I said to my little nephews, "traygame *los Americanos*." They had arisen early to present me with some flowers; they took me by the hand and conducted me to the house of my fellow countryman, just in the same manner as a

blind man would have been led the way. I felt much interest in the sympathy of my boys; for they seemed to think that, as I could not converse with them in Spanish, I might also be deficient in eye-sight, and with the greatest care did they lead me along, pointing out every article and turn that we came to.

The imagination of my nephews that I was deficient in sight, was not more strange than the impression that the Mexicans often have, of those who do not speak their language; for they will talk in a loud voice to a foreigner as if he was deaf, and the oftener they receive the reply "*no intende*," the louder will they vociferate.

I explained to the American my misgivings, and the suspicions I had of my interpreter, and requested him to converse with my servants, and if possible to ascertain how far my conjectures were correct.

My friend was but a short time absent, when he returned bringing with him Marcelino, who related that my interpreter had informed my men that there was gold in my trunk, and had made them the proposition that I should be murdered, and they, with the spoil, make their safe retreat to the Pacific coast.

As for myself, I felt convinced of the truth of his statement, and could then well discern why the interpreter had expressed so many fears of my guide, which was done to prevent any suspicions of himself being otherwise than interested for my safety. Indeed, so strong were my suspicions of him on the day previous, that I should certainly have come to deadly conflict with him, had I not wished to reach Caneles on the same evening, as I was unwilling to camp another night with so dangerous a man. I therefore did not wish, if it could be avoided, to take his life, or run the risk of losing my own, knowing that, when at Caneles, I could easily relieve myself.

I had my interpreter and all of my servants summoned before the Alcalde, and in his presence settled with each.

In discharging them from my service I commanded that they should depart from the town immediately, or else suffer the consequences of the law. Marcelino I would gladly have reserved, but he was obliged to return to Zacatecas to deliver the animals I had hired of his master.

The mineral of Caneles is situated in a deep and narrow ravine, having the mountains on the east and west, rising immediately to a general elevation of from two to three thousand feet above the town. I could find no one who could give me the height of any of the northern mountains above the sea, or their latitude and longitude. For the want of instruments I was unable to ascertain those important scientific observations. The mountain to the east forms an extensive curve, and for many hundred feet appears to have no declivity, but is of an abrupt perpendicular steep; while in some parts of it the rocks protrude in vast dimensions over the deep gulf beneath.

High towards heaven, yet not to the height of the mountain, the beholder cannot cast his eyes without viewing the deep azure blue mist hovering over the scene. This mist arises from the foaming tide of the Caneles river, as it bounds and surges over the rocks, down its headlong course due north. The mountain to the west is an immense rock, only accessible to the slow and circuitous footsteps of human beings, and the flight of birds. Its uneven side has a dark and brownish aspect. Its extended top is crowned with two peaks, or nipples, which circumstance has caused it to be named the Silla Cerro, the saddle mountain. The whole scene is completed by an extensive view between the two cerros to the north; while to the south, the towering points of the Madre Monte are visible.

The climate of Caneles is spring and summer. Vegetables and fruits which abound in any other latitudes, are plentifully cultivated there. The trees are perpetually green; for as fast as the leaves fade and fall, others are fresh expanding; added to which the golden harvests of the orange

tree are ever beautiful to the eye and tempting to the taste. The name Caneles means cinnamon. Whether this plant was ever cultivated there I could not ascertain, and was therefore at a loss to know how the place acquired its name, unless it was by a freak of fancy. The streets are necessarily narrow. To the inhabitants this is no inconvenience, for a wheeled vehicle of any kind has never been seen in the town; indeed it would be impossible for one to ascend the mountain at any point.

The mountains of Caneles have ever been celebrated, from the early discovery of the country, for abounding in silver, but from the poverty of the ore, the mines have never been extensively worked. But what has rendered the place famous as a mineral locality is, that veins of quicksilver have been found there. These have never been worked successfully. I learned that the people were much flattered with hopes, from the fact that an English company had but recently commenced opening a mercury mine, under the experienced management of Mr. John Buchan, an enterprising Englishman. Mr. B. is a son of the celebrated Capt. Buchan, who was lost in a British exploring expedition to the North Pole.

I was shown some specimens of quicksilver ore, of which there were two kinds. The liquid metal was contained in a soft red stone. In the first kind the mineral was not perceptible in the rock, which was only ascertained to be possessed of a foreign substance by its weight. The second and last degree of specimens differed from the first only by the mineral protruding out of the stone in small detached particles, the only contrast being, that the one was richer in mercury than the other.

Quicksilver is never found but in secondary formations. The ore is pulverised into an impalpable powder, and the mineral is obtained by washing the offal from the silver. The inhabitants of the mines of Caneles are most grievously affected with the loathsome disease bronchocele, or goitre,

called by them *buche*. This distressing complaint is a chronic enlargement of the thyroid gland. The goitre tumour exists sometimes on both, but most generally at Caneles, on one side of the larynx and trachea. As the tumour enlarges it becomes more inconvenient, and distresses the respiration and the voice, in proportion to its inward tendency.

At Caneles, where one-half of the population was diseased, I saw some of these tumours of great size, having to be suspended in a handkerchief or bandage from the neck. I did not witness any so large as those described by Dr. Mott in his travels in Switzerland; for he says, that at Martigny he saw one,—"the size of the tumour was of such colossal dimensions, that the poor woman was obliged to crawl along the floor upon her hands and feet, dragging the gigantic dewlap and pendulous mass after her."

At Caneles, children, born of goitred parents, are certain to be idiots, or deaf and dumb; in some instances the limbs are feeble and ricketty. The disease is hereditary. From all the information I could obtain of the disease at Caneles, it must have had its origin from the atmosphere, and not from the water. The most effectual remedy there used was half a drachm of hydrate of potash, mixed in one ounce of lard, and nightly rubbed on in small quantities.

Dr. Eberle, in his treatise on goitre remarks—"In many localities, where bronchocele prevails endemically, particularly in the deep valleys of the Alps, the disease is very frequently attended with stunted and deformed developement of the body, and a corresponding deterioration of the intellectual faculties. It is thus that, amidst the magnificent and beautiful scenes of nature, man alone is doomed to dwindle—to sink under the inevitable influences that surround him, from his noblest prerogatives to the lowest state of corporeal and intellectual deterioration. The unfortunate beings who are afflicted in this manner, and, in some situations, the majority of the native inhabitants are more or less affected, and stunted in growth, with enormous

heads, tumid necks, and manifest a degree of mental habitude, which in aggravated instances amounts to absolute idiotism. The combinations of affections is called *cretinism*, and the unfortunate themselves *cretines*. In no part of the world is the disease so prevalent, and so distressing in its character, as in some of the valleys of the Alps and Appenines. In certain districts of Switzerland and Savoy, about the whole of the indigenous population are more or less affected with goitrous enlargements. In the valley of the Rhone, at Martigny, St. Maurice, Agile, Villeneuve, Bourg, Lucerne, and at Dresden, and in the valleys of Piedmont, this disease is extremely common, Goitre occurs also in various parts of Asia, particularly in Chinese Tartary, and in Hindostan; and in certain districts in Africa it is said to be very common. In England, the disease occurs very frequently in certain mountainous districts of the counties of Derbyshire, Buckinghamshire, Surrey, and Norfolk. In our own country also there are localities in which goitre is of frequent occurrence. At Bennington, Camden, Sandgate, Windsor and Chester, in Vermont, bronchocele is very common. In the state of New York it is frequently met with at Oneida, the German falls, in the Onondaga valley, in the township of Manlius, at Brothertown, in the neighbourhood of Angelica in Alleghany county, and in various other localities in the north-western districts of the state. In Pennsylvania, it occurs, not unfrequently, at Pittsburg, at Cannonsborough, Brownsville, and along the Alleghany, Sandusky and Monongahela rivers. It is met with in Virginia at Morgantown and on the banks of the Cheat river."

None but him who has been similarly conditioned can imagine the feelings of myself, when standing by the tomb of a relative, in a distant and foreign country. The health of my brother, J. P. Gilliam, M. D., U. S. Consul at Monterey, on the Pacific, having become delicate, he retired to the mountains of Caneles, for the benefits that might accrue

but, at that retired and isolated place it pleased the divine will that he should depart from this to a better state of existence. Having taken into my charge his two sons, it became necessary that I should visit some of the towns in the surrounding country, which, perhaps, would cause me to travel to Maztelan.

That I might finish my business without the loss of time, I did not tarry at Caneles longer than till the 4th inst, on which day I found myself again in a saddle, and accompanied by four others; an American, of Caneles, going as my interpreter. Strange as it may appear, as at the time it did so to me, my road, for ninety miles, was to be down the bed of the Caneles river, confined as it is, for that distance, between two *cerros*, upon the right hand and on the left. I do not believe that I shall hazard a contradiction of opinion when I express my belief that, perhaps, for the same number of miles, another like journey is not made on the face of the earth. The river averages from fifteen to twenty yards in width, at first, but, at the latter half of the distance, it is increased by the junction of another stream, bedded immediately between mountains, abruptly rising to an immense height.

These mountains are only accessible to the flight of birds. The fall of water is rapid, and must be from two to three hundred feet in the mile. The bed of the river is rocky, and, in some places, of such extent as to almost choke up the way from the passage of travellers. A journey on that stream is always perilous; for often, while an animal would be in the water up to the feet of its rider, many short angles have to be made to pass around the large smooth rocks, too high to be surmounted, while the sure-footed beast would have to bound over others, plunging into the water on the opposite side. A mishap would, in many instances, overthrow both rider and mule into deep sucks, flooding round rocks, which would inevitably destroy them.

There were, nevertheless, times when short points of

rocks or earth, sometimes steep, and at others low, had to be passed. Then the traveller would have to encounter the cat's-paw, or some other briery growth, which would tear his clothes and flesh; for all the vegetable kingdom in Mexico is thorny. Indeed the idea often strikes one, that all nature there is at war—the birds, the beasts, the creeping insects and reptiles, as well as the vegetation, are all armed for formidable aggression and defence; and yet, above every other consideration, man, who should be lord and subduer of uncultivated nature, is the bane over all, for he excels in his unkind and hostile deeds. The traveller has to spend the night at some narrow nook that may promise scanty picking for his animals, and safety for himself. He does not proceed more than half a day down the river before he perceives that the mountain-sides, which will admit of growth, are covered with forests of log-wood.

I was of the opinion that the mule was the most stupid, as well as the most stubborn of animals: but, on my first acquaintance with him, I was agreeably disappointed. To do him justice, I now express myself, that I believe him to be more useful and more sapient than the horse. He is more docile—coming and going to his work with unsubdued fortitude and unchangeable habits—and, if obstinate, never so without the shadow of a just cause. He has a distinctive knowledge of his master, and all his other animals; and, undriven, will select his own *apparao*, (pack-saddle,) out of an hundred; which, when packed, he will take the most particular care of; that his cargo will not come in contact with another. If he has to pass under a limb, he will just stoop enough to let his load pass the obstacle untouched. If a rock projects from the side of a mountain, his instinct instructs him to lean to one side, so that a box of goods will be unharmed.

I have had my riding-mule to stoop and lean, so that my body would have free passage under suspended difficulties or through narrow defiles. He will punctually follow the

whistle, or the tinkling of a small bell, when his path-way is too narrow, bushy and crooked for him to see his leader; and at night, when he is turned loose to graze, the mule will not suffer the animals of another *ariero* to associate and mix with his own company, but will drive them off at the cost of life.

He never, in the darkest night, loses sight of his leader, which is always a white horse, or mule, and in the morning, when each ariero goes in search of his animals, each will find his own clustered around, or in sight of, their particular leader. The mule, however, is a despiser of his own species, and in his love for the horse will, day and night, fight for the nearest sociable position with him. But, perhaps, the reader may think I am jesting; yet, if he will take a trip to Mexico, he will find that I have not told all for fear of incredulity.

The town of Topie is a rich *mineral*, situated upon a high mountain, fifteen miles north of Canelas. It is a place of great antiquity, and has three times been destroyed by the Indians; to this day, bars of silver, that were buried under its ruins, are found; while silver bullets are ploughed up in the fields. Since I have mentioned the subject of ploughing, I will remark, that I made inquiries as to the mode of cultivating the land in the cold regions of Madre Monte, and was informed, that there lived in those mountains some Indians who have not been civilized, who are in the habit of planting their corn to a depth beyond the influence of the cold. Sometimes, I was told, they were known to have planted the grain as low as two feet under the earth, and if it should germinate and sprout to the surface, before the seasons of frost has passed, and be nipped down, the warm earth beneath would nourish the roots, and cause them to again grow up to perfection. Thus while the roots of corn are in a warm region, the stalk and fruit are nourished in a colder clime.

The Indians were the first cultivators of corn, and well

understood its nature; and I was struck with the probable correctness of the philosophical reasoning of the aborigines. I remembered well the time of having read in agricultural works, that roots of corn would penetrate to unknown depths, and the ostensible reason of the phenomenon at once appeared to me. The root was seeking a warmer element downwards, so as the more effectually to cast upwards its genial nourishment to the stalk.

My journey down the river was three days in continuance, and when I emerged from between the two *cerros*, it was a source of much rejoicing to me; for it would be difficult for any one to imagine its disagreeableness, who never has had the misfortune to travel through water and over rocks, for that length of time. If their animals are not shod, their feet soon become tender, and the fatigued traveller finds that, besides being reduced to the necessity of progressing slowly, he cannot help sympathising with his distressed beast; while, at the same time, he is obliged to drive the barbarous Spanish spur into his sides.

The view of open space was never more beautiful or welcome to my sight. The forests a perfect medley in every direction, by their growth being so indiscriminately mixed, that the whole woods were thickly matted, and almost impenetrable, save by the paths of ancient usage. The birds, too, of many descriptions, strange to me, were merrily singing—the flocks of paroquets of many species, drowning, by their wild and frantic screams, the melodies of the other portion of the feathered tribe. There were some birds that particularly attracted my attention—the Chechalaca, or pheasant; to me it resembled more the guinea fowl than any other bird I was acquainted with, being symmetrically and beautifully proportioned—its plumage was dark with slight variations of shade, and although wild in its native state, no fowl is more capable of being rendered domestic.

The *Gonaco* attracted my attention from its peculiar

habits. It seemed to indulge in hallooing a sound that resembled its name, and was seldom observed to feed; it is said of these birds that they build their nests of a poisonous root, only to be found in these habitations; and it is unknown whether it originates from the bird itself, or else it alone possesses the secret of the locality of the plant. This root is said to be a specific remedy for the sting of the alicran.

My interpreter had seen much of New Mexico, and from his acquaintance with the trappers of the north, was possessed of a fund of anecdote very interesting to me, during my journey—one of which he related to me, which deeply engaged my attention and feelings, as a remarkable tale of love. A trapper had taken to himself a wife, with whom he lived for several years in the utmost confidence and affection. The woman not only loved her lord, but adored him, as being vastly her superior. Her only care was to cultivate maize—to dry his meats—stretch his skins—and to neatly keep their little wigwam, to please her beloved white man. But the faithless husband, discontented with the pearl of great price, was tempted by other beauties, and took to his lodge another, whose loveliness seemed to please him better. The old incumbent, without expressing her sorrow, at once departed; but after the lapse of several months returned. She suddenly appeared under the roof where alone she had enjoyed happiness. The trapper and his bride were taken by surprise: he at once beheld the altered features, the hollow cheek, the sunken and fixed eye, and the heart of the man relented. He kindly spoke to her; but her grief and her purposes were too deeply settled, to be then cajoled in her wrongs. With an eye riveted upon him, and a voice that faltered from the pangs of a broken heart, she said, "George, I am going to die," and before the guilty hunter could arrest the fatal knife, she had driven it to the hilt in her bosom, and expired at his feet.

On the 8th inst. I arrived at the town of Tamazula.

This town is also in addition called the Fortunate, a name bestowed upon it by Victoria, when President of Mexico, in consequence of its having been his birthplace; however, agreeable to the adage, that a prophet has no honour in his own land, the memory of the illustrious chieftain and president, was not cherished by his former fellow-citizens, in a manner that reflected glory on the departed. They did not hesitate to affirm that his successful career commenced by his having been a high-way robber. The town contained about one thousand inhabitants, and exhibited symptoms of a rapid decline, by the appearance of the houses in every part of the city, which seemed to be in a falling condition.

I was particularly pleased with the hospitality of the citizens of Tamazula. Sr. Don Morillo, the Prefect, would not consent that I should board at any other than his own house; while the Curate gave a brilliant ball, to which I was invited. Although the Curate seemed to be a man of about sixty years of age, his person was singularly well proportioned and handsome. His elegance of manners and splendid waltzing, appeared to me, notwithstanding he was a curate, to be more becoming in him, than any other individual I ever beheld. Two of his daughters, as also one of the priests of the town, were at the entertainment. The young ladies were as modest, beautiful and accomplished as any others I saw; insomuch that they far eclipsed all others in the room, on that truly joyous occasion.

It may appear remarkable to the Christians of the United States that the clergy of Mexico should have children, but I can assure them, that they may have no doubt on that score; for no truth is of more acknowledged publicity, and nothing is more common than for the favourite unmarried wives to live with the holy fathers—at the same time their families are better educated and provided for, as a community, than any others in all Mexico.

I was informed by Mr. John Russell, an old Englishman of Zacatecas, that the curate of Tamazula was a remarka-

bly honest and discreet man, in all his transactions; agreeable to the manners and customs of the country,—for by no other standard can an European or a North American judge of Mexicans, but by the contrast of the habits of some with others, in the peculiar characteristics of their national character. They are entirely independent of all the world else, in their religious, political and social relations—having at the same time all of the institutions of the rest of civilization,—yet differing materially in their practice of the fundamental principles of them; their teachers, the priests, and the old Spaniards causing them to believe that they are the perfection of creation, and that it is their high prerogative to make all mankind bend to their supremacy, in conjunction with the religion of Christ, the Apostles and the Pope; in order to answer their own selfish purposes. I have not, for the life of me, been able to discover from whence those enlightened and refined people have derived their power, to be the best commentators on ethics, expositors of law, and arbitrators of social compacts.

Tamazula is situated on what is called the Tamazula river; it being the same stream that floods out of the Madre Monte, upon which Caneles is built; but from the junction of the Umaya with it, it assumes the name of Culiacan, and continues to be a deep broad stream, until it arrives upon the plain next to the ocean. It there sinks, and is absorbed by the sand; and mouths in the Pacific—an insignificant and diminutive river.

The city of Culiacan is situated near the union of the above named rivers. It contains about five thousand inhabitants, and is the capital of the department of Sinaloa. The city does not differ in its appearance, or in the character of its people, from any other capital of Mexico. But there, as in the other cities, the priests, with their broad brimmed shovel hats, and the military, have congregated to take care of the souls and weal of their dear people! General

Urea is the appointed king-bird of the corn-crib in that department.

Cosala is a town about one day's travel from Culiacan, and from Cosala it is but two days' journey to the port of Mazatlan on the Pacific ocean. Mazatlan is entirely defenceless from the surges and winds of the ocean, not possessing any of the attributes of a good harbour, and is unsafe for shipping, by its having a large rock immediately before the town, upon which vessels founder in time of storms. However, Mazatlan is the principal commercial port on the Mexican coast, on the Pacific ocean. It contains about five thousand inhabitants, composed of every people from the four quarters of the globe, and seems to have been an attractive point for all the varieties of the human family. I imagine that the same number of people can hardly be found, where there is such a farago of complexions and tongues.

Mazatlan is the principal stopping point in a voyage from China, by way of the Sandwich Islands, to the United States and Europe. The scale and the shell-fish of the Pacific coasts are abundant and excellent. There is a blue-gilled oyster caught upon this coast, equal to any of those in the Chesapeake bay. The Mexicans of the Pacific have a manner of preserving them, different from any other mode I ever heard of. Immediately upon taking them from the water, they are thrown upon the fire, and when roasted until the shell opens, the oyster is salted and dried. Put up in this manner it will soundly keep in any climate, just like the mackerel that are barreled up in salt.

On the plains of the Pacific coast I enjoyed perspiration, the atmosphere being more dense and humid than in the interior, and the heights of little elevation. Instead of the south-west winds having always a refreshing coolness in them, it was not unfrequently the case that they resembled the monsoons of the east.

Guadaloupé de Calvo is a town of about ten thousand in-

habitants. It is situated about two days' journey north of Tamazula. It is, I was informed, of only ten or twelve years' existence, and its great population can only be accounted for from the fact that people congregate at such places where minerals are in successful operation. The silver mines here are worked by an English company, under the management of Mr. John Buchan. The mines yielded very profitably, but the ore was becoming poor. The enterprising agent informed me that it was his intention to seek new veins, and abandon those of Guadaloupé de Calvo.

The houses of Guadaloupé are covered with shingles, and the windows had sashes and glass in them, as the English were the first builders there, and besides timber is plentiful in the mountains.

The mountain regions around Guadaloupé abounded in very rich silver ore. An English gentleman related to me an interesting account of the richest vein of silver perhaps that was ever opened. At a place called Refugia, (the refuge,) an Indian, who followed the trade of making pack-saddles, having ascended a mountain in search of a particular kind of grass, which he used for the purpose of stuffing, perceived, under a turf, a rock matted to a bunch of roots. Upon examining the stone, he found that it was heavier than rocks of that size generally are, and exhibited the specimen to a Spaniard, who informed him that it was one-half silver.

The liberal Indian told the Spaniard where he had made the valuable discovery, and offered him a free gift of one half of his right in the mine. The partners, with buoyant hopes, commenced proving the value of their enterprise; which resulted in the entire vein being one-half silver, and the other half stone. After they had extracted several millions of dollars of the precious metal, the mine became impoverished, and was abandoned, and the Indian and his partner were left worse off than when they first began to try their fortune. They were remarkably industrious in squandering their money faster than it could be dug from

the earth. The Spaniard is no more; the poor Indian is yet alive, and a beggar at Mazatlan.

The inland road to California is direct from Guadaloupé de Calvo, north-west to the mouth of the Colorado river, where it enters into the Gulf of California. This way is like the most of all others of the Mexican roads, being nothing more than Indian trails, travelled only by animals, and never by carriages.

The country between Guadaloupé de Calvo and the Colorado river is much infested by the Apache Indians, who are very barbarous, often cutting off the nose and ears of travellers, close to the head, and then turning them loose to their fate.

The ports of Mazatlan and Guaymas are the usual ports of embarkation to Lower and Upper California, by the way of the ocean. But as I have preferred to comprehend my observations on California in a supplement to my journal, the reader is referred to their perusal as thus embodied.

By the 25th of April, I returned to Caneles. My journey to the *tierra calienta* (the hot region) had been a very pleasing one; for, while there, the pores of my skin had been opened, and instead of looking and feeling as if I should dry up like a chip, as in the arid elevations of the Cordilleras, I enjoyed a healthful glow, with sometimes a profuse perspiration upon the surface, which caused my whole system to feel as if I had been turned loose from a prison-house, for the benefit of free respiration.

The inhabitants of the *tierra calienta* differ very much in their appearance from those of the *tierra frio* and the *tierra templado*, the cold and the temperate plains. The people of the hot clime are of a darker tinge, excepting those who with care confine themselves to the shade. With these the continued perspiration has the effect of purifying and bleaching the cheeks. There was another marked difference observable—although the major part of the population had not such robust frames, nor looked so healthy, there

were more persons of plethoric habit in the hot, than either of the other regions.

The table lands are healthy, the people mostly dying of old age. A barber of a northern department shaved me, who was said to be ninety years of age. This man said he had been barber and chamberlain to two of the viceroys of Mexico. His hand was steady, and his deportment firm.

The ladies of Mexico consider the hair of their heads one of the most attractive ornaments. It is only in the tierra calienta that it can grow to perfection, sometimes reaching to the ground; and, when dishevelled, covering the whole body.

I have never yet learned from philosophy or philosophers, why it is that upon the same latitudes of the Atlantic and Pacific coasts, the thermometer ranges many degrees higher on the latter than on the former sea-board. By survey, it is estimated that the Pacific is higher than the Atlantic, and consistent with both theory and well-known experience otherwise, the greater elevation is colder than the lesser. Is it because the snow-capped mountains of the greater altitude are upon the Atlantic coast, extending to the atmosphere there a cooling efficacy, which cannot reach to the opposite side of the continent? Possibly the fixed laws of the atmospheric currents, from the ice regions of the poles, may sweep stronger from north to south, and *vice versa*, upon the Atlantic shores. As it is not within my humble sphere to divine the results of philosophical causes, I shall leave my inquiry, if worthy of attention, to be responded to by those who are practical on such subjects.

Business demanded that I should not long repose from travel, and accordingly on the 29th instant, I departed from Caneles for Guanosebi. My route lay across the Madre Monte, but in a different direction to the one I had previously travelled, being to the north-east. I was unaccompanied by an interpreter; consequently my conversation with the Mexican gentleman who accompanied me was ex-

pressed in a very laconic, and often in an unintelligible manner; so much so that I became disgusted with its disagreeableness, and abandoned, for six days, speaking, unless when necessity obliged me. After sleeping six nights in the open air, I arrived, on the seventh day, at the place of my destination, a town containing between two and three thousand inhabitants.

In whatever condition I was placed, I found in the face of nature some loveliness to admire, or some curious phenomenon upon which to speculate. While extended on my back on the ground, with my face towards the sky, when camping out, the remarkable moon-shine of Mexico never failed to absorb my attention. It differs from the light of the sun, only in that the latter has always a red glare of burning brilliancy, while the soft and silvery light of the moon is brilliant enough to enable the beholder to see almost as distinctly as by the illuminating rays of the king of the day.

It cannot be doubted that, in a tropical and arid region, the moon does light the earth more brightly than is the case in a less elvated and more northern latitude. Would that I were able to describe a Mexican moon-shine! Without a cloud to spot the sky, the stars twinkle more brightly in her absence. They are more numerous, and display themselves in more clusters than are seen through our humid atmospheres. The vision takes hold of objects far removed, and with a discrimination nearly equivalent to that afforded by the light of day—the air is clear, as when in the morning the moment preceding the rising of the sun in the full blaze of light. The atmosphere is always mild and balmy at night, and, in the warmer valleys, the gentle zephyrs floating over the plains are congenial, affording an enjoyment which in truth renders it a luxury to repose under the canopy and protection of heaven.

At Guanosebi I was so fortunate as to meet with Mr. Buchan, who was on a visit to that place, to try experiments on the silver ore there. All of the rocks upon and under the

surface of the earth, partake more or less of silver. Mr. Buchan informed me that he should open a mine at that place, which he thought would be profitable. To him, and also to his Mexican lawyer, who seemed to be very much of a gentleman, I was under obligations for their liberal aid in endeavouring to accomplish an unsuccessful litigation with a citizen of that town.

After the general and the priest, the lawyer is the most formidable personage in Mexico. Mr. Buchan related that, in consequence of the many difficulties which originate in transacting business with the Mexicans, he found it to be a matter of both importance and profit to employ, continually, on behalf of the company, a lawyer; by doing which he only found it necessary, in the commencement of difficulties with obstreperous customers, to call into his presence his lawyer, and all obstacles were removed.

On the second day after I had commenced my return to Caneles from Guanosebi, we suddenly came in view of an extensive field, and my Mexican friend, and all of the servants, in one voice, exclaimed—"Santa Anna's hacienda campus!"—They seemed to be more rejoiced than if the property had belonged to themselves. To me, it was another convincing proof of the undying attachment of the Mexican people for their tyrant.

The brilliancy of his bloody exploits, and his chicanery and art, by which he has subdued them to his will, has filled the inhabitants with awe and reverence, which ever will result in that renowned chieftain being their master. If at any time a sudden revolution should displace him, it must be but temporary; for no sooner can he pitch his squadrons in the field, than the dread of his anger and terrible revenge will subdue his enemies, and quiet his countrymen, (as has always been the result of his politic conduct,) who will fall down at his feet and cry—Hail, Dictator!

The officers of the government are all of his own creating—his generals are the governors of cities and depart-

ments, and of his own appointing.—And although they may, at the outset, have joined the standard of the revolutionary party, yet, no sooner do they behold Santa Anna's banner floating in the breeze than they will forsake their sacred obligations, vowed to constitutional liberty, and fly to the usurping master they were pledged to conquer. Away with the mockery of presidential and dictatorial chiefs!—Call not a military despotism a republic!—The lovers of freedom scorn the deformity.—Make Santa Anna king—emperor!—and no matter how hard he may goad a people, too base to be sensible of their own wrongs, and too treacherous to defend their public institutions.

While upon my journey I met with the courier, who informed my companion that many murders had recently been committed by the ladrones, on the public high-ways; and also that Santa Anna was preparing for a war with the United States and England at the same time. The courier seemed to have no apprehensions of defeat on his master's account, but appeared to be well assured that Mexico would triumph in the contest.

The mails of Mexico are most generally carried by Indians on foot, who transport them, from post to post, more speedily than it could be by horses. An Indian, freighted only with his small wallet of corn-meal, and his little package of letters, will take his straight course over mountain, hill and dale, that cannot be travelled by animals, and by that means shorten the distance, overcoming space in a manner wonderful to be related. The robbers never molest them, for money is never carried in the mails, or the Indians possessed of valuables.

CHAPTER XIX.

Return to Caneles. Apache Indians. Two small boys of tender years. Commence my return journey. Manage two men better than three or six. Pioneer round my camp. The Madre Monte pass. Ladrones on the way. How to know ladrones. Received at Durango. Mr. Charles E. Bowes. An individual who has been long from home. Two new servants. Departure from Durango. My servants not good packers. Arrived at the hacienda campus de la Casa Blanca. Irrigating dam of water. Corn-field. Pastoral lands. Speculation in old horses. Purchased two pack-mules. A mule runs away. A nearer and better route. Storm, and hospitality of a Mexican. Wet condition of my cargo. Descending to a lower region. Distress and hazard. Slept in a separate rancho. A signal given. Defeat of contemplated attack. Arrived at the mineral town of Matchanla. Discharged my servants. Wealthy Mexican. An American. Summons before the Alcalde. The law-suit determined. Second summons before the Alcalde. Arsentation of my commission. Newspaper from the U. S. Texians. President Tyler. An old Spaniard. His daughter. Fruits and vegetables.

I returned to Caneles on the 25th of May, not without having incurred the hazard of battle with the Apache Indians, as it was said by the people living east of the Madre Monte, that that tribe had supplanted the Camanches, and were infesting the mountains.

Having taken under my charge my two nephews—small boys of tender years—and having resolved on returning to the United States; at one time I contemplated embarking from the port of Mazetlan to my far distant home, but the idea of twice crossing the equator, and living five or six months on the ocean, made me abandon that project.

I therefore determined that, without delay, as the rainy season was rapidly approaching, I would hazard my destiny in a journey across the continent to the port of Tampico on the Gulf of Mexico, as that journey seemed to be the least fraught with evils.

In accordance with my last resolve, having closed my business at Caneles, I, on the 30th of May, commenced my return-journey to Tampico, distant from Caneles about seventeen hundred miles. In consequence of my former difficulties with interpreters, I was unwilling to employ one. Having learned also, by experience, and the many fatal

casualties which had happened to others, the danger of having a large body of armed servants, I resolved to employ but two, this number being less by one than I should have had; however, it was my opinion that, in case of conspiracy, I could manage two better than three.

One of my servants was a good-looking man, of about fifty years of age, and had been recommended to me as being trust-worthy; the other was a younger man, of his selection, being his *compadre*, or god-brother.

While travelling in the mountains, where I was obliged to sleep under the canopy of the heavens for my house-top, and the Madre Monte for my bed of down, I informed my two men that, when the hour of repose had arrived, they must not rise from their serapis unless called to do so by me; and told them if my orders were violated they must take the consequences. I had obtained an abundance of China tea, and, after my nephews had been put into their carteras, and the servants had reclined upon the earth, I took good care to keep my large tea-pot at the fire, and at intervals, during the whole night, I freely indulged in drinking the beverage. It was my determined policy never to let my men know when I slept; and what more astonished me than any thing else was that, in the extremity of the excited condition in which each night would find me, I had perfect control of my waking and sleeping moments. My belt of arms could not have weighed less than eight or ten pounds, yet I never unbuckled it from my body; and, after the fatigues of the day, I would rise from my couch, repeatedly during the night, to see that all was well, and pioneer round my camp; on every such occasion I would, solitary and alone, take a hearty draught of my strong green tea.

While seated near the burning faggots, and the low night-breeze was sighing through the tall forests of the mountains, by the cheerful exhilarating excitement which the tea produced, I thought of the friends with whom I once revelled

over the wine-glass; and I was reminded often of the familiar ballad:

"Oft in the stilly night,
Ere slumber's chains have bound me,
Fond memory brings the light
Of other days around me," &c.

The Madre Monte passed, I lodged for the last time at the village of the Boca de la Santa Cataline, on the 17th of June. On the 24th I arrived in safety at the city of Durango; though not without having twice encountered ladrones on the way. The first time, my company being, fortunately, increased by being joined to that of other travellers, prevented the robbers from making an attack: the second, in which I at one time almost gave our chance up, I was so well seconded by my old servant, who showed such strong symptoms of fight when the ladrones made their first demonstration of attack, that the day was our own. Hostilities commenced by the ladrones brandishing their weapons, and shouting and twirling their lassoes in the air; while they rode around us in a circuitous direction.

When the traveller thus beholds his assailants, he must, without hesitation, show his foe by his preparations and bold stand, that he will never surrender, and dare them to battle; they will then suppose that the booty to be gained may not be worth the hazard. They will sheer off and soon be lost entirely to sight. However, when the traveller, on such an occasion, has exhibited his willingness for action, and the enemy does not retreat, but continues to keep up the charge, he must not lose the most suitable moment to fire upon the foremost of the party. The best aim is at the horn of the saddle, for a side or front shot.

I was received at Durango by my acquaintances with the same hospitality and attention which had characterized my first visit. It was my good fortune to meet, on this occa-

sion, a fellow-countryman, Mr. Charles E. Bowes, an artist from St. Louis, Mo. His talents were doing him much credit in Mexico, and he had the promising hopes of a rich reward for his adventurous enterprise.

Through Mr. B. I obtained some intelligence from the United States, it being the first news I had received for several months. He informed me that when he left home, it was his intention to spend the winter in New Orleans, and showed me letters of introduction he had received and taken to that city. One of them was from F. W. Risque, Esq., a lawyer of St. Louis. The well-known handwriting of that gentleman, seen unexpectedly in a foreign country, touched the feelings of my heart, for he had been my early playmate, and we had grown to manhood together, being the nearest neighbours in old Virginia.

An individual who has been long from home, and is fatigued with travel, is the first person to seek pleasure, as well as to recognise any thing locally familiar or national. On my arrival at Durango, I again patronised the De la Santa Paula Meson. No sooner did I dismount, than my host informed me that there were two other Americans with him. They proved to be Mr. W. H. Folly, the India-rubber man, and Mr. J. R. Hamblin, the Achilles, who fired a cannon from his shoulder, and pulled against two or more horses. On the 26th inst., Sunday, their exhibition was to come off at the Plaza de los Torros, which I attended. It was truly surprising to witness the unbounded admiration expressed by the spectators. But while the American performers attracted the attention of the Mexicans, my own was by the performances of the native clown, who had robed himself like a saint, bound his head with a wreath, and painted his face white. If the limit of decency would permit, my readers would be more astonished at a synopsis of his address to an audience of five thousand persons, than the citizens were at the show.

The performances concluded, I accepted an invitation to

a ride in the Alemade; but after the coach had passed a few times round the place, it came in contact with another vehicle, the result of which was to break down both, in accordance, I thought, with my usual fate in carriage riding; there, before thousands of people, the pleasure excursion terminated. At night, in company with my friend Mr. Bowes, I visited the theatre, and there enjoyed the sight of the numerous and splendid assembly of ladies, more than I did the dull prosy performances. The prompter was stationed immediately in front of the stage, and read every syllable of the play, while the actors mouthed the words after him.

At the city of Durango I obtained two new servants, as my Caneles men would not further leave their homes. My friend Mr. Stalknit drew off the articles of agreement between us—one of which was, that I should, on their return journey, give them a horse each. Every preparation being made, upon the 28th inst. I departed from Durango. I chose a direction to the left of that which I had formerly travelled; yet my course was due south; I had been particular in obtaining from an individual a way-bill of my route, with the names of places I could stop at, each a day's journey apart.

I had not travelled more than two days before I discovered that my servants were not, or pretended not to be, good packers, for my mules seemed to be suffering much from their cargoes. My suspicions were at once aroused, for I well knew that Mexican servants, who were in the habit of travelling, understood how to load an animal. My men had besides been recommended to me as being the best of arrieros. However, in eight days time, I arrived at the Hacienda Campus Casa Blanca, the estate of the White house. The journey was fatiguing, and my horses and mules were much jaded by the trip. So I determined to remain a few days at that place.

At Casa Blanca the buildings were good, and my quarters excellent. The estate was under the best improved

condition of any that I had an opportunity of examining in all Mexico. In the first instance, there was an irrigating dam of water, one league and a half in extent. It was formed by a wall of earth and stone, built from hill to hill, and was filled by the rains. The water had, up to the time of my visit, been turned from it in a stream of eighteen inches in diameter, for a period of six weeks, to water the various parts of a corn field—two leagues and a half square.

The water was conducted over the land by canals, and turned upon the furrows by flood gates at intervals, the canals running along the higher elevation of the farm. There was corn sealed up in many cone-like houses of from one to three years of age. There were other extensive lands used for pasturing purposes, upon which hundreds of animals grazed. There was at the principal granary a stack of what the Mexicans call fodder, at least fifty feet high and three hundred in length. *Oca*, fodder, in Mexico is the stalk with the blade not cured separately, but cut all together.

Indeed, I have, in the hot damp valleys, seen corn that had been thickly sown for the purpose of making fodder. The estate belonged to one of the most enterprising and speculating citizens of Mexico. I was informed that he once bought two thousand old horses, at two dollars each, and that when they were boiled into soap, they averaged him fifteen dollars apiece.

At Casa Blanca, in consequence of the injuries my animals had sustained, I purchased two excellent pack mules. I did not at that place exchange my Durango servants, as I had an opportunity of doing, fearing that if I did, I might only be turning loose two knaves to follow me, at the same time I would only have two others of a like character in my employment. Thus conditioned, I again commenced my journey, intending not to rest until I should reach Matehaula, distant six days journey from Casa Blanca.

Upon my set out from the rancho of the white house, I

experienced a vexation, which ultimately resulted fatally to one of my mules. My servants had chosen to pack the animal which I had only recently purchased, with a cargo, and when my caravan was put in motion, the wild animal, being turned loose, with the usual shrill whistle and whoop, instead of keeping company with the rest, bounded over the plain with the speed of a greyhound; and every moment I expected my trunks would be burst open, and my money and goods scattered over the ground. However, the beast was with some difficulty lassoed, and all was righted; but not before its loins had been so injured by the shifting of its load, that the poor beast fell powerless to the earth. It was as fine an animal of the kind as I ever saw, and had cost me, on the day previous, twenty-five dollars. Its cargo was attached to another mule, and we proceeded on our journey.

About mid day my oldest nephew, whom I had instructed to be attentive to the conversation of my servants, informed me that my men said, that they would not travel the way I had directed. Upon my charging them with the fact, they insisted that they knew a nearer and a better route, which they said they would prefer, for my benefit. I peremptorily said, that, at the peril of their lives, they were not to deviate from the *cármino real*, the principal road, and that I would hold them responsible to deliver me at the different houses I would daily direct them to.

That day's journey, to my great joy, put me on the east side of the Cordilleras, where perhaps lies buried more of the precious metals than the world will ever have industry sufficient to excavate: for it seemed as if a continued vein of silver ran through their whole extent. I was rejoiced to have those high, romantic, and bright silvery mountains to my rear; for while locked up between them they shut off from my view the oft-repeated lingering looks that I would cast towards the skies that hovered between myself and my own distant home. The waters of the Atlantic would be a

blessing to my sight, while the shores of the United States promised to be my elysium upon earth.

The night of my first day's travel was most disagreeably spent at a wretched rancho in a deep glen. I had directed my servants to put up my carteras under a beautiful musquiti tree that stood before the door of a small filthy house, but by the time they commenced their work, a cloud suddenly sprung up, and the kind Mexicans invited me to lodge within doors. At the time I felt very grateful, but no sooner did the rain begin to pour down, than it ran through the flat roof and flooded in at the walls—while I sat all night with my youngest boy in my arms, and the other one was laid up on a shelf. I only thanked God that the frail tenement of dirt did not tumble to the earth. My principal care was to preserve my arms and ammunition from being damaged. I therefore had my guns and pistols wrapped up in the buffalo robes to keep them dry: at the same time, however, I did not part with those around my body, as I always regarded them as my best friends. The buckle of my belt was never disturbed, except to draw it tighter, when I was pinched with hunger, or overpowered with fatigue; indeed, from the commencement to the end of my journey, it was lengthened about six inches, leaving me but the shadow of my original self.

The next day dawned clear and cloudless. Notwithstanding the wet condition of my cargo, my kitchen suffering the greatest injury, I had to throw away my stock of crackers and dried beef, as in that climate such articles will not keep after a wetting. Our journey lay across the dominions of the Conde de Coral, the most wealthy of all the citizens of Mexico, as I was informed. Ever since I had left the Cordilleras on my rear, my direction was a little south of due east. As I progressed, it was observable that I was rapidly descending from an elevated to a lower region; for the towering peaks of the back-bone mountains were lost to my view, while the distant points of others would anon

show their heads, in a country far below the elevation that I was on. I remarked that the end of each day's journey would place me upon a declivity, beneath that of the former one. In one instance, my entire day's travel was in the evening closed by abruptly descending a short height, which put me upon a plain as much below the former one, as was the elevation of the hills to my rear. You are right, Mr. Kendall, if I mistake you not, (your book not being at present in my possession,) in calling those tables "steps," for, while traversing them, I felt as if, had I only had on the boots of the famous giant-killing Jack, I could have strided down them as nimbly as ever you yourself descended the marble flight of the St. Charles portico at New Orleans.

These plains are chiefly wooded with palm-trees, apparently not possessing the sterility of the table lands of the Cordilleras. I progressed as rapidly as circumstances would allow, not alone for the reason that I wished to terminate my general distress and hazard, but also the more especially on account of my apprehensions with my servants. Besides having sufficient convictions of the evil intentions of these men, they were the only Mexicans in my employment who had ever presumed to be impertinent to me. Supposing that I was bound to take them to Tampico, they did not think I would discharge them on my arrival at Matehaula, provided they spared my life for so long a time.

Their criminal designs were clearly demonstrated by their every act, and I felt convinced at the same time that, to part with them before I reached Matehaula, would only be to increase my dangers. I was for ever on the alert, day and night, knowing that my safety depended on showing the ruffians that I had no confidence in them, and at every moment held them at defiance. I had been cautioned to beware of my servants, by an old Mexican gentleman at Casa Blanca, who instructed me never to suffer either of them, on any occasion, to ride behind me; or, when the lasso was in their hands, not to be within its influence.

I was particular to make my servants keep in front of me, my two nephews riding in the centre of the party, while I rode at the distance of fifteen or twenty paces in the rear. Thus I had my whole caravan perpetually before my eyes; having the advantage, in the result of a conflict, not to have to turn or wheel to meet my foe. Upon the fourth morning of my journey, having spent the night previous at a shepherd's rancho, I discovered after about an hour's ride, that we were about to pass a narrow defile, where the points of two mountains tapered suddenly to the plain. It happened that just in the level space between the heights, my men dismounted to tighten the ropes that held the cargo of one of my mules, and in doing so they so frightened the rest of the animals that they left the road, and scattered in the thick musquiti growth. I immediately unfastened my double-barreled gun, and springing both the locks, made a brisk and circuitous ride to head my animals and drive them again into the proper track, which at length I succeeded in accomplishing. At that moment I heard a shrill whistle on the hill to my left hand; I instantly wheeled to a half face to the men, and the same position towards the direction whence the sound proceeded. My servants stood motionless eyeing me, for they correctly supposed that my first shots would be levelled at them. Discovering that I held them at bay, I quickly looked around and plainly perceived the broad rim of a Mexican hat behind a large palm tree, at a distance of about thirty yards upon the hill. I directly pointed my gun at the tree, and exclaimed, "*Ladrone, yo estoy fronte combate por vida e propriedad!*" ("Robber, I am ready to fight for life and property.") To which the man behind the tree responded, "*Señor, yo estoy unico a porbre pastor!*" "(Sir, I am only a poor shepherd.") I directed my men to mount and go ahead. We had not advanced far before one of my boys called out, "*Mira teo,*" ("look, uncle.") I spurred my horse forward, when up bounced another *shepherd*, with a pistol in his hand. The

man seemed to be much alarmed, and was soon lost in the musquiti bushes. I shall never have a doubt that my servants had formed a conspiracy with the shepherds to rob me; but the scoundrels, discovering that their designs did not operate as they intended, were deterred from making the attack when the signal was given, and thus I escaped!

Upon the 14th day of June, I arrived at the mineral town of Matehaula, and put up at the meson de los Angelos, the meson of the angels. Here I met with a Mexican whom I had seen at Durango, and also an American. I explained to them the disagreeable situation I was in, and stated that it was my intention to discharge my servants, sell my animals, and hire an arreiro, who could give good bond and security for my safe delivery at Tampico. The Mexican seemed to be a perfect gentleman, and had the reputation of being wealthy, and therefore honest, as they say in Mexico, because above the necessity of stealing. However, he appeared to take a lively interest in my welfare, and promised to make a contract for me with an arriero, whom, he said, he knew well, and for whom he would also enter as security on a bond before the Alcalde. Such a kind offer, and so unexpected, was thankfully accepted, and the gentleman made good all of his engagements. My American friend likewise put himself to the trouble of selling my cargo mules, and further assisting me.

I then summoned my servants to a settlement, and taking their receipts for the amount of money due them, let them select two of my horses for their return to Durango. I was certainly obligated to furnish them with a horse each, but not to give them their choice of my animals, and I would not consent they should have their own selection. However, they summoned me to appear before the Alcalde, to show cause why they should not have my best horses. Although I felt satisfied as to the result of a law-suit with Mexicans, it being always decided against foreigners; yet I determined, for the novelty and experiment, to contest their claims.

My friend, the American, accompanied me to the Alcalde, and acted as my speaker on the occasion, being very fluent in the Spanish tongue.

The case being opened, the Alcalde demanded to know why I refused animals to my servants? My friend replied that I had not denied to my men their rights, but that I objected that they should take from me my two best horses; that he himself could testify to my having given them the choice of three animals, nearly as good as my best ones, and amply able to carry them all over the republic, and more my contract did not require of me. He then exhibited the written agreement, with the signature of the two servants affixed thereto, which only required that I should furnish two horses, for their return to Durango, and not my best animals. He also stated the perils and injuries I had received at their (the servants) hands. The Alcalde responded that the poor fellows should have good horses to return home, and he expected, he said, that the animals left in my possession after the men had taken their choice would be good enough to answer my purposes! Thus the law-suit terminated. Not disappointed with the decision of the case, I returned to my quarters, my friend accompanying me, much vexed at himself for his not being a better lawyer.

We had been seated but a few moments in the room, when a Mexican appeared at my door. He was dressed with only a pair of scanty pants and a serapi, which was thrown over his left shoulder. He held a sword in his right hand, and said that the Alcalde had ordered him to summon us to appear instantly before him, to show by what authority we were travelling in the Republic of Mexico.

Such a mandate took me by surprise, for so singular a demand had never before been made of me, and I determined to meet the crisis in the best way I was capable of doing. While my friend had retired to get his passport, I took occasion to doff my old travelling dress, and put on my consulate uniform, and, both being ready, we bade our naked

swordsman to lead on. As we passed along the streets the people stared, and began to collect in groups, while many ladies fairly ran out of their houses to look at us.

Arrived at the Alcalde's room I walked boldly in, making my sword, which I used like a cane, jingle upon the floor as I stepped up to the table, behind which the old black-eyed and grey-headed judge of law and equity was seated. The old fellow was very obsequious, and seemed to count every button on my coat, while the pens dropped from the fingers of the clerks. The consternation was laughably evident. After looking, for a moment, the officer of justice in the face, I threw him my commission, reserving behind my *exequatur*, to see if he knew any thing of his business. He unfolded the parchment awkwardly, turning it over and over, as if by so doing he could make Spanish out of it, and then handed it to his chief-clerk, who, perceiving there was a difficulty in it, stepped to a window to obtain a better light on the subject. He then turned it about in every direction, and endeavoured in vain to decipher the English of the commission, now holding it bottom upwards, as often as in any other position. His eyes at length caught the name of "Bocanegra, Minister of Foreign Relations," and, with the same excitement as if he had discovered a gold mine, he shouted out, "*Esta bueno.*"—(it is very good)—and then handed me my document, as he did also my friend's passport, with the accompanying—Esta bueno.

My friend informed the dignified Alcalde, that it was a very serious thing to insult an American consul; and, but that I was a good-natured man, I would forthwith communicate to Santa Anna the decision he had made in the case of the horse, as well as the impertinent demand he had made of me, as to what right I had to travel in Mexico. We then left the apartment without my being asked for my exequatur. The contemptible summons of the Alcalde I will ever remember, as the most amusing incident in my life.

At Matehaula I, for the first time since my departure from the city of Mexico, had the happiness of seeing a newspaper from the United States. My friend presented me with a New York Courier and Inquirer, which contained General Jackson's able letter on the subject of the annexation of Texas. At that time I also learned, for the first time, that Mexico was about to renew the war with Texas, by marching thirty thousand of her troops into that country. I could but have many feelings of sorrow for ill-fated Texas, but at the same time I did not believe that the government of the United States would be so deficient of its honour, its interest and its duty, as to forsake Texas, and suffer her citizens to be slaughtered by a barbarous foe.

I was the more encouraged in this opinion, in reading the soul-stirring response of the French minister to the House of Deputies of Mexico, touching the cruel and revolting intentions of that country to carry on the war. It convinced me that the civilized world would not quietly behold the brave Texians butchered, regardless of the laws of nations, and the sacred principles of humanity.

The name of the President of the United States would have descended in infamy to posterity, if he had not interposed his warning voice to Mexico. The manly decision of character of President Tyler, upon the Texas question, has covered him with glory enough for any one man; and the millions of people who will inhabit the fertile plains of Texas will, through all time, hail his memory as a bold defender of all that is held dear and sacred to civilized nations.

There lived at Matehaula an old Spaniard, who took up the impression that I was a doctor of medicine. He invited me to his house, and conducted me to his family chamber, where I was introduced to his wife and several other ladies. From thence he carried me into a large saloon that was splendidly furnished with furniture from the United States. From the ceiling of the high room was suspended a glass

ship, completely rigged, which answered the double purpose of an ornament and a chandelier.

From that room he took me from one apartment to another, until we at length entered a handsomely furnished room, having a bed, on which was a lady. Taking me by the hand he conducted me to the bed-side and said, "There, what do you think of her?" The poor woman seemed to be rapidly breathing her life away, for the rattling in her lungs could be h a d at several paces from her. She pressed my hand, and wished to know her malady; the father insisted also, and I replied that it was consumption. He instantly seized my other hand, and grasping it, said, "You are right, for my daughter has, for the last seven years, been lingering under that disease—and if you can give her a healing remedy your reward shall be whatever you may ask." I made my several excuses, and finally relieved myself by tacitly promising a mixture.

The old Spaniard seemed to take much interest in me, visiting me often on that day. He said that the only apprehension he had of my safe arrival in Tampico was that, as the Texian war was to be renewed, the war-cry of the populace and the army there would be "*Muérte en todo Americanos!*" (Death to all Americans!)

I had, ever since the commencement of my journey from Casa Blanca, been descending to a hot region, and at Matehaula I found fruits and vegetables in abundance. The sweet orange and the lemon, the pine-apple and the banana, the plantains, plums, pears, peaches and water-melons also were abundant. I obtained also some delightful lettuce cucumbers and tomatoes, which I found most congenial to my appetite; for when travelling I could never buy vegetables, excepting in the towns. But I must be permitted to say that, at Matehaula, I, much to my regret, consumed the last remainder of a ham which I had purchased of a Frenchman at the city of Durango, at the dear rate of five dollars

and sixty-two and a half cents. It weighed ten pounds ten ounces.

But an individual, who had been accustomed all his life to eat good bacon, finds that, after a long privation, he is willing to pay any price for that old familiar diet. The Mexicans are not fond of indulging in the meat of hogs, for they say that devils reside in them. For myself, I think this a great mistake, for the evil spirits must have come out of the swine creation, and taken up their abode in the hearts of the Mexicans themselves—for while the flesh of the one is healthy and good, the deeds of the others are those of the devil. If a problem in Euclid can be more satisfactorily demonstrated than the above, then I shall ever have a doubt remaining on my mind, respecting the capacity of the human intellect to arrive at just conclusions, by a systematic course of reasoning.

CHAPTER XX.

Arrieros. Departure from Matehuala. Old Spaniard and my American friend. Picture of the crucifixion. Beyond the confines of the town. Rancho in the defiles of two mountains. Opening of the earth. My servants diligent and faithful men. Rolling and wooded country. One of my men a merry little fellow. Expertness with the lasso. Aherera a Spanish Jesuit. Arrived at the town of Tola. Fertile and hilly country. A mountain cross. A hilly and well-watered valley. Splendid scenery. A grotto, the residence of a saint. Servants dismount. A saint of Socono. The rainy season. Occasional ruins. Arrived at Tampico a Santa Anna. Custom-house officer. Meson kept by Mons. Constant Maresnet. Meeting with Mr. John Fulton. Situation of Tampico. Houses and plazas. Santa Anna's victory. Capt. F. Chase, U. S. Consul. Texas, question of the next session. Annexation of upper California. Columbia river. Rail-road to New Orleans. Napoleon. An examination of the map. Public lands. Monopoly of commerce. Different commissions. Annexation of Mexico. Southern boundary of the U. S. No limit to the north. Hudson bay and Mississippi rail-road. Home protection. Free trade. Russian possessions

On the morning of the 18th inst., the arrieros, three in number, whom the polite Mexican had employed to transport me to Tampico, arrived, and were in due attendance to receive my freight.

The old Spaniard and my American friend were also present to witness my departure, and take leave of me. Having settled my meson bill, and embraced my friends, as I was riding out of the great court of the house the old keeper ran up to me, as is often the custom in that country, and presented to me the picture of Christ bearing the cross. I well understood the old man's object; it was his last opportunity of appealing to me for money. It is always expected that he who presents to an individual the print of a saint, or any of the holy family, should receive more or less change for a donation.

The wicked thought, at the moment, occurred to me, to pretend not to understand him; and I asked, if the picture was intended for Santa Anna? He, with some surprise, said that it was not. I then inquired, if it was Bocanegra or Tornel? With much anger he denied that it was either, and in turn asked me if I was a Jew? He said that the

picture was *Christo muestro salvador*, (Christ our master and Saviour.) My American friend, at that, gave me to understand, that I was in a difficulty. I took the picture, looked at it, made the sign of the cross and threw the man a *clacka*, which seemed to please him, and I departed.

The priests in Mexico are not the only people who make a commerce of their religion. It is the privilege of any individual to hawk about saints, for money-making purposes. My old friend on foot followed me beyond the confines of the town, during which time he shook my hand three several times. Having, in the most emphatic manner, assured me that my journey would be a safe one, he ascended a mound of earth which gave him an extensive view of the plain, and as often as I looked behind me, I could behold him in the same position, his large gold-headed cane glistening in the sun, as he waved his hand, the peculiar Spanish signal of adieu. Our course, after we lost sight of Matehaula, was due east.

The night of the 18th, I spent at a rancho, situated in a defile of two mountains, at which place I witnessed a singular phenomenon. Before reaching the house, I discovered that the narrow plain had an opening extending from mountain to mountain, from six to eighteen inches in breadth. It seemed as if the weight of the mountains had been too much for the earth to support, and thus cracked it. The Mexicans who lived there could not give me any information as to how, or when, it happened, which must have been during the convulsions of an earthquake. On a former occasion I witnessed, about ten miles north of the city of Durango, a place where a large portion of a plain had sunk to a general depth of twenty feet from its original elevation. The level surface of the plain seemed to have sustained no injury, while all along both sides of the mountains were plainly perceptible where the plain had abruptly broken off, and sunk to a deeper foundation. In lime-stone countries, as

that is, such things were not before unknown—from the falling in of the earth, to the great cavities beneath.

My servants proved to be diligent and faithful men, attending to all of my interests with strict punctuality. To employ an arriero whose personal responsibility is such as to enable him to give security for the safe deliverance of his charge, is the only mode by which freight or travellers can be transported. The arriero then has every thing at stake, and it may be expected that he will use every effort, even at the hazard of his life, to make good his engagement —not because he, in his peculiar occupation, is more honest than others of his countrymen, but for the reason that his obligations would make him the loser by his neglect or want of bravery. Arrieros have been known to perform their obligatory duties in good faith, when at the same time they have plundered others, and murdered defenceless travellers.

For seven days after my departure from Matehaula, my direction was over a country for the most part rolling, and better wooded than any other of the table lands I had seen in Mexico. Every thing seemed to pass off *bueno*, as the clerk had it. I noticed that my men appeared to know every person they met, and that I was greeted by all in a manner to which I had not formerly been used in the country. One of my men was a merry little fellow, who was perpetually whistling and singing. He was very expert with the lasso, never suffering a horse, mule, or steer to escape him. He would heave at all animals that came in his way, and some of his rencontres were very diverting and exciting.

The precision with which the lasso can be thrown by an experienced hand is truly astonishing, for it matters not how swift may be the speed of the animal, he can be taken by any limb and subdued. My man could catch at full speed a horse around the neck, and at the same time, by a slight twirl of the rope, form a perfect halter around the head and nose of the beast.

On one occasion, not having live stock upon which to

practice, he discovered a dead mule lying on the plain, and cast his lasso so that it passed under the head of the prostrate carcase, galloping off and dragging it after him. Nothing, he said, could lay so close to the ground but that he could take hold of it in the same manner. As he dragged off his defunct prey, the rattling of the bones within the entire skin of the dead mule, caused me to remember the account of Aherera, a Spanish Jesuit, who civilized the Indians of Chihuahua. He was interred at Santa Cruz, where he had died, in a vault of one of the churches. Notwithstanding he has been buried two hundred years, yet he is undecayed, and once every year his body is taken out of the tomb, dressed in his priestly gown, and set up in the midst of the congregation. Mass is then said for the repose of his soul. The atmosphere in Mexico, but more especially in the more arid portions of the country, is of such a drying nature that animal matter shrinks and dries away, rather than consume by putrid decomposition.

On the 25th instant, I arrived at the town of Tola, a place containing about two thousand inhabitants, and situated on an uneven and confined narrow slip of land, between two hills. At Tola I drank some excellent water. I also bought some good wine, and laid in a plentiful store of provisions, to last me until I should arrive at Tampico.

On the morning of the 26th, I again commenced my journey. After travelling two leagues over a fertile and highly cultivated country, I discovered that a mountain of considerable magnitude lay before me, over which the road wound. My journey was most disagreeable, for the recent rains had made the black mould of the earth very miry, and between mud and stone alternately, our animals progressed very slowly, and with much difficulty. Yet my journey was not without its interest, for the mountain was covered with the most magnificent forest of live oak that I ever beheld.

After fording a small river at the foot of the mountain,

we travelled along an uneven and well-watered valley for about one hour, when we again commenced ascending a higher mountain. So precipitate was the height, that one-half of the day was consumed in gaining its summit by the zig-zag and narrow path. I was well repaid for the toil, for my eyes never before feasted so ravishingly as upon that occasion, when I cast them upon the level tierra caliente below me.

The rains that had fallen had given to the abundant vegetation a most perfect green aspect; while the farm-houses, with their sharp thatched roofs, had a picturesque and romantic appearance. The pleasure I enjoyed at beholding this scene was short-lived, as the most desirable blessings usually are; for I had to proceed in my downward direction, only occasionally obtaining from some prominent projection a bold view of the enchanting landscape beneath, as it were to cheer my hopes of reaching some elysium.

Having descended about half way down the steep, my men all suddenly dismounted, when I perceived other travellers on foot. I was not long in discovering the object of the halt, for the arrieros gravely took off their hats, and having ascended a rude flight of steps for about twenty feet, they entered a small cavern in a large rock, and kneeled before an image. After praying devoutly, each one left a small piece of money on a niche in the cave. My little nephews, excited with awe, were desirous of following their example, and I gave them money to pay for their orisons, believing it would do them no harm, and thinking that the necessity of prayer instilled into their young minds might, in after life, be of valuable consideration to them.

Upon inquiry, I ascertained that the image worshipped in the grotto was the protecting saint of travellers against ladrones. Many were the "hair-breadth 'scapes" related of travellers, through the instrumentality of that deity. Marvellous, indeed, are the wonder-working powers of many of the saints of Mexico! I was informed of one of these who

resided in a chapel at the village of Socono Chihuahua, who had such a repugnance to being taken from her home, for supernatural reasons, that every bold pretender who had attempted it was either struck dead, or found her too ponderous to be carried by human strength.

It so happened that a Kentuckian, who had strayed by the way of St. Louis and Santa Fe, to the town of Passo del Norte, which is situated contiguous to Socono, hearing a party of gentlemen dilating upon the tenacity of the saint to her church, could not perceive how a wooden figure not larger than the common stature and proportion of a woman, could be either so heavy or self-willed. Agreeable to his habit of determining difficulties, he asked—what would the crowd bet that he could not bring her from the chapel into town? The company were awe-struck at the impiety of the man, and no response was made; but he insisted on knowing who would lay a wager for his purpose. A Mexican who, like himself, could not resist an opportunity of betting, having also a strong faith in Saint Ysidore, took up the Kentuckian for an inconsiderable amount. Prompt to his sacrilegious purpose, the Kentuckian mounted his horse, and was not long absent, when he returned galloping into Passo del Norte with Saint Ysidore, dressed in all her divine apparel, seated behind him. He certainly gained the bet, but the gathering mob informed him that he would have to fly from the town for his life.

As I have before remarked, my return journey was begun at the commencement of the wet season. The rains are in some degree periodical during the day, as they are in the months of the year. About noon clouds are perceived, and the traveller can bivouac; by the hour of three o'clock, the tempest of rain and lightning will have passed over, and the traveller can again proceed. However, in the month of June, the first of the three wet months, the rains are irregular; but, when they do fall, they pour in torrents upon the luckless wayfarer, cold and chilling; for it must be re-

membered that the traveller, previous to the fall of wind and rain, was scorched with the burning heat of the sun—and the quick transition from hot to cold is painful. The hardy little mules, during the storm, will refuse to progress, and, with their faces turned from the pelting blast, will shiver like pointer dogs.

My journey for seven days was uninterrupted, saving by occasional rains. It was principally through a flat, hot country, until we arrived within about three leagues of Tampico, when the land became undulating, as we approached the sea-board. The coast was heavily timbered with iron wood and fustic. At half past three o'clock, P. M., on the 31st of June—a period long to be remembered by me, as terminating my journey in Mexico, of about four thousand miles, I arrived at Tampico.

I now feel convinced, from all that I have seen of the world, that it is only necessary for an American to go abroad to satisfy himself that the United States has the only free and happy people upon earth, while their country is more blessed with richness of soil, the abundance of water, and purity of atmosphere, than that of any other clime upon the habitable globe—and that all her imperfections are blessings, when drawn in bold contrast with the institutions and inhabitants of foreign countries.

I was met at the suburbs of the town by a custom-house officer, who is there stationed to receive arrieros and travellers, and was escorted into the city of Tampico á Santa Anna. Having passed my baggage through the custom-house, I then hastened to the meson kept by Mons. Constant Marcuet and his lady, who were German French by birth, and at their house I found excellent accommodations.

At this meson I had the pleasure of meeting with Mr. Andrew Fulton, a fellow-countryman of the state of Ohio, with whom I had travelled from Cincinnati to New Orleans. Mr. F. was an enterprising dealer in stock, and was profitably engaged in making shipments of horses from Ohio and

Kentucky, to different ports of Mexico. His adventure this time was to Tampico. It was not only pleasing to meet with a gentleman with whom I had formerly travelled, but I was also happy in learning that, like myself, he should take the first opportunity of returning to the United States.

The city of Tampico is delightfully situated upon an elevated promontory, having the river on one side and a lake on the other. It contains about six thousand inhabitants; but is, like Vera Cruz, annually decimated by the malaria vomito. In 1843, it is said, two thousand of the population were destroyed by the yellow fever. Many of the houses are built after the style of those in the United States, with sharp shingled roofs; I saw also one weather-boarded building.

The inhabitants of Tampico, on my arrival, were much excited by the reception of the intelligence of the execution (and the frying in oil of the head) of General Sentmanat at Tabasco. Such a deed, approved of both by the expressed language of the public prints, as well as by the sentiments of the citizens of Mexico in general, the civilized world can easily judge what the people of that country are. Coeval with the reception of this news, the arrival of some twenty or thirty free exiled negroes from Havana, elicited much attention.

There are four large plazas in Tampico. The one on the river, fronting the custom-house, is the principal of these. In the centre of it a costly monument is being erected to commemorate the much-boasted Mexican chief Santa Anna, having achieved a victory over the Spaniards in the last sad effort which the king of Spain made to overpower and subdue his former colony.

As the encampments and the relative condition of the two belligerent powers were shown and described to me, by an individual who witnessed the rencounter, I could not see that the fate of war was decided in favour of the Mexican chief by any bravery or wisdom he might have exercised;

but more to the influence of the vomito, in the ranks of his enemies. Spanish gold did not fail to have its influence with the patriot and defender of the banner of liberty—for the Spanish General secured his retreat by bribery, when he was otherwise entirely helpless and hopeless.

Captain Franklin Chase, a native of the city of Baltimore, is the U. S. Consul at the port of Tampico á Santa Anna. His able official returns, as published by order of the government, are sufficient evidence of his ability as an officer, and a recommendation of himself as an American. I found him to be a perfect gentleman, and a true son of republicanism after the school of his own country. Captain C. could not inform me who were the candidates of the approaching presidential canvass in the Union; but he gave me all the particulars of the exciting Texas question up to that time. He invited me to dine with him upon the fourth day of July. I could not help pledging the Consul in a glass of wine, hoping that the American congress, being in session, would, upon that great day, annex our sister republic to the United States.

The annexation of Texas has ever appeared to my mind to be necessary to the general prosperity of the Union, the location covering a large portion of our defenceless territory; while at the same time, if the United States designs to cherish her manufacturing interests, which consist principally of cotton fabrics, it does seem to me to be all-important that our government should extend its dominion over the territory of Texas. It is conceded, I believe, both in Europe and America, that the cotton grown in Texas is of a superior quality to that now cultivated in the southern states, saving the very small and inadequate amount of the Sea Island cotton of South Carolina; and therefore, if Texas should not be able to maintain her independence, and be conquered, or annexed to any other foreign power, particularly any of the manufacturing nations, such as England or France, the manufacturers of the United States would be

powerless, for they would not be able to turn a wheel in competition with them, by having to pay a duty upon the raw material.

Again, the annexation of Texas is of valuable consideration, believing that the public mind will be much relieved upon the agitating question of slavery and abolition—for the increased demand of slave labour in Texas will so completely exercise a salutary effect, as to draw a considerable portion of the coloured population, from the northern slave states, that it must result in the addition of seven new free states to the glorious confederacy of the Union,—comprehending that vast section of country from New Jersey to North Carolina and Tennessee.

Likewise, as a gentleman of much foresight remarked to me, that if Texas should be admitted into the Union, with restrictions upon the subject of slavery, the extent of that country would be curtailed, for the fact is ostensible, that in the existence of Texas as an independent country, the subject of slavery could not be controlled within her dominions; but if connected with the United States, its latitudes will be circumscribed, and an effectual barrier placed against it.

I am not alone satisfied with the annexation of Texas to the United States. It must be ostensible to all who will examine the map, that to complete geographical limits of the south-western portion of the Union, Upper California must also be annexed—first, for the reason that the United States territory of Oregon covers so small an extent of the Pacific coast, that the American commerce will ultimately not have sea room,—the only port in which the shipping of the United States can anchor upon her own bottom, being at the mouth of the Columbia river—and that not a good harbour, as the loss of the Peacock, an American ship of war, can fully testify. Again, American shipping and commerce would ever be subject to vexatious and interfering restrictions, from the fact, that the Columbia river is claimed by the English to be the boundary between the Union and

Great Britain, and that power would therefore exercise a controlling influence and dominion over one half of the river.

The territory of Oregon is not so valuable an agricultural region as Upper California; and besides, the latter has the advantage in climate as well as in a horticultural and mineralogical point of view. In Upper California are three of the best ports, and the *only harbours* for shipping, upon the entire coast of the Pacific ocean, upon the continent of North America. If any one should doubt the practicability of a rail-road from New Orleans to the Pacific coast, let them read Kendall's expedition to Santa Fé, or any of the accounts of the St. Louis traders to that place, and he could not have a moment's hesitation in believing all that may be said, regarding its easy success, as also the importance of accomplishing such a design. If frail and heavily laden wagons can be drawn between the above named places, without roads, over the plains and thence to the Pacific, it is self-evident that a rail-road could be constructed without difficulty, or what an engineer would call a single obstruction. By an examination of the map, it will be perceived that a rail-road, running from San Francisco to New Orleans, would only have to cross the head waters of some of the streams of Texas, and if any of the shoots of the Mississippi river should prove to be a formidable barrier, it can easily be discovered that the road could escape all of the waters of Texas, and passing over a dry country, could be carried direct to Napoleon at the mouth of the Arkansas river. This road would never have ice or snow to cover its rails, or obstruct its passage, but could perpetually be travelled at all seasons.

This should be a national improvement, for no one or more localities could claim exclusive benefits, or receive an aggrandisement, apart from the whole Union. And therefore, it does appear to my mind, that it would be advisable that the sales of the public lands should be made of each

state and territory, and appropriated to this great enterprise,—and thereby prevent a monopoly of the sales of land, and the tide of emigration in any exclusive section of country.

While upon the Pacific coast, I inquired of an American whom I met there, and who had travelled all over New Mexico, if it was his opinion that a rail-road could be built from San Francisco to the Mississippi river? He replied that "he had no doubt or hesitation in saying that he could drive a sulky all the way from San Francisco to New Orleans, at the rate of ten miles per hour, without the fear of upsetting it."* When a road has been constructed from New Orleans to the Pacific, the Mississippi and the Ohio rivers would then have the *monopoly of the commerce of the Pacific ocean!* which would also control that of the world! There would then be not one of the states of the Union but could have a direct trade with the East Indies, China, and the Islands of the Pacific. The south-west, by the Gulf of Mexico; North and South Carolina, by the Charleston and Knoxville rail-road; Virginia, by her rail-road from Point Pleasant to Lynchburg and canal to Richmond; Maryland, by the Ohio and Baltimore rail-road, and Ohio and Potomac canal; and the whole northern states, from Pittsburg, and the way of the Lakes.

In the place of its requiring a tedious and a dangerous voyage from any part of the United States, to and from Canton, of twelve months, passengers or freight could depart from Boston, Mass., and in sixty days' time be landed in any port of China. It will therefore appear obvious to every American, that it is first important to obtain a good and suitable port upon the Pacific ocean for a depot, and I

* My thoughts upon a Pacific rail-road had all been written out while in Mexico, and consequently long previous to the petition presented to Congress upon that subject, by Mr. Whitney, of New York.

know of none better or so direct as that of San Francisco in Upper California.

Some hesitating, or fastidious reader, while debating in his mind the feasibility of such an undertaking, would, perhaps, exclaim to himself, "Where is ambition or annexation to terminate—must all Mexico come in too?" I would reply, No: for all south of the Rio del Norte and the Californias, the country is too dry, and divested of agricultural advantages to be desirable to the North American or the European. It is necessary, for those races to live happily, that the land should be cultivated; and that there should be water-power and fuel for the uses of machinery, and these are not to be found in Mexico, south of the boundaries above spoken of. The remainder of the country is but a barren leg—not Santa Anna's leg—of the North American continent, unprofitable for any thing else, but its mines of precious metals; and, as the Mexicans are very good miners, and fond of the occupation, I am unwilling, for one, that any other people should be corrupted by its intoxicating pursuits.

Again, the Mexicans are a different race of beings from those of the United States—being only Spanish and Indian, and speaking the Spanish language, and wedded to an established religion. While, on the contrary, the inhabitants of our Union are composed of every people and kindred of the whole earth, each one sitting under his own vine and fig-tree, and enjoying the liberty of his own conscience. They would, therefore, tolerate none of their territories in an established religion of worship, by law, in any portion of their wide-spread and happy dominions. If the Mexicans could become Americanised, and would pay their national debt, I, again, for one, should have no objection to them.

Notwithstanding I have had the presumption to affix a southern boundary to the United States, yet I am far from saying that it should have a limit to the north; for I verita-

bly believe that the finger of God, as it has been seen in all other history, is in it. So sanguine is my faith in the arrival of the period, when the American flag shall mantle the whole of North America—not only the Canadas, but the whole of the British possessions on the continent must become annexed to the United States. If an individual will only cast his eyes upon the map, he will at once behold, that by a railroad, connecting the head-waters of steam-boat navigation of the Mississippi river with the Hudson's Bay, the North Sea will have an internal connection and commerce with the grand whole! And thus it can be perceived, that while the United States would extend from the Atlantic to the Pacific, the star spangled banner, instead of hovering over a few states, would triumphantly wave from ocean to ocean, and from sea to sea!—May God speed the magnificent consummation!—for the United States would then have home protection, and home market, without the enacting of a single law; and free trade, by a liberal high-mindedness, should hail "peace on earth and good-will to man;" while a prosperous and happy world, enlightened by true religion and constitutional liberty, will sing hosannas to the great *I Am*. And the sons of Columbia will have been the instruments of these great works, and the benefactors of the whole human family.

Some one may inquire,—What would become of the Russian possessions? I think I may safely answer,—that while the United States will have to purchase the territories above spoken of, by the generosity and friendship which the Autocrat of all the Russias has evinced towards the Union, that it may be reasonably calculated on, that the Emperor would make a donation of that useless and frozen slip of his American dominions to the Union. Or else, we could easily do without it, and remain in peaceful satisfaction with an agreeable neighbour.

Nothing can be so complete in this world but what critics can discover some imperfections. It is said by philo-

sophers, that the earth and the sea are diseased, and when the angel of destruction shall descend to the harvest of death, neither priests nor physicians can heal—the destined individual must journey to the tomb.—Every rose must have its thorn, and every sweet its bitter. And, notwithstanding fair fancy can picture to the beholder the unparalleled prosperity of the United States, and the before unseen Temple of Liberty; yet, there is a *canker* within, and the meddlesome Puritan, who is, by his generous efforts, attempting to leaven the whole lump, will, I am afraid, often make the cake *all dough*. Thus I have spoken—as the Indian chief said when he handed the calumet to his neighbour, And, as the old woman said, when she had no meal to bake a cake—I shall hope for the best, and trust to God; for he can work when the wisdom and cunning of man shall fail.

CHAPTER XXI.

A parting word to the Arrieros. Captain of Banditti. The American flag at the mast-head of a schooner. Drive a bargain with the captain. Meeting at the consul's. Contract concluded. Returning home in an American vessel. British steamer. Set sail. Mouth of the river. Custom-house officer. The vessel searched. Officers take leave. Pilot takes us in tow. Narrowly escaped foundering. Captain no gentleman. Injuries sustained by my fellow-countrymen. Unhappy feelings. Resolve. Same way of defending myself at sea as on land. The captain alarmed. Mr. Fulton's enjoyment. Dazzling luminary of the light-house. Watched all night. Anchored off the Balize. Embarkation in a small boat. Perilous voyage. The steamers that are met at the Balize. Put to sea. Rudder lost. The southerner. Consternation. N. E. Pass. Steamer Phœnix.

In the opening of this my last chapter, I will take the occasion of a parting word as to the arrieros who delivered me at Tampico. I was so much pleased with the manner in which the Mexicans had performed their duty, that I mentioned my satisfaction to some gentlemen of Tampico. On informing them of the name of the Mexican of Matehaula, who had done me the kindness to employ the arrieros for me, they expressed themselves much surprised; and affirmed, that my Matehaula friend was the most renowned captain of ladrones infesting that portion of Mexico. I defended the fame of my friendly Mexican, by expressing the native doctrine, that he was rich, and beyond the necessity of dishonesty. They replied, that his wealth had been obtained by robbery, and that I must attribute my safe deliverance—not to the good company that I was in—but to some freak of fancy in the captain, who had put me under the escort of his well-known and chosen men.

The kindness of the Mexican towards me, I can only account for by my being in company with my nephews, to whom he paid much attention.

On my arrival at Tampico á Santa Anna, it was with great joy that I beheld the American flag at the mast-head

of a schooner of an hundred and five tons burthen, which was taking in freight for the United States. She was the same vessel that Mr. Fulton had chartered from New Orleans to that port, and my friend proposed that we should return in her. I had no objections to the proposition, provided that the vessel would take me to the port of New Orleans, which was also the wish of Mr. Fulton.

Understanding that the cargo would be taken in, and the schooner made ready for sailing by the twenty-second of July, my friend and self went on board to drive a bargain with the captain; which only resulted in his proposing that, on the following morning he would meet us at the office of the United States' consul, and that he would there abide by whatever Captain Chase would say, as to the price of our passage to the Balize.

At the appointed time, all parties having met at the consul's house, it was agreed that Mr. F. and myself should pay two hundred dollars for our passage to the mouth of the Mississippi river. Captain C. would have nothing to do with the transaction, as the schooner had been consigned to him. But, in the presence of us all, he inquired of the captain of the vessel if he was aware that his schooner being freighted for New York, he would become responsible to the underwriters should he cast anchor in any other port. The captain promptly responded, that he was not unacquainted with his liabilities, and, as his ship was good, he had no fears of his cargo being damaged; and he could not resist the opportunity of making two hundred dollars, which would not cost him the loss of half a day's time. Thus our contract was closed, in the presence of the American consul.

I have been particular in detailing the above contract in consequence of the after incidents of the homeward voyage. I felt delighted that I had an opportunity of returning in an American vessel—and, notwithstanding that it was small, I was entirely reconciled to undergo all of the incon-

veniences that such a craft is subject to. I thought of the many hazards through which I had recently passed, in my peregrinations by land, and I felt much gratified that I should be under the protection of the American flag, and have a fellow-countryman for my commander, in my journey at sea.

It was true that, by the delay of a few days more, I should have the chance of a passage in a British steamer by the way of Havana—yet, the more accommodating mode of travel I was unwilling to wait for, as the Mexican vomito had commenced its ravages at Tampico, and was already sweeping off its inhabitants, by giving them but a few hours' notice. Mr. Fulton and myself therefore resolved that, at any cost, and at the first opportunity, we would take our departure from the sickly and devoted port of Tampico á Santa Anna.

Early on the morning of the 22d instant, our anchor being weighed, and our sails set, we sailed down the river seven miles before we came to the gulf. At the mouth of the river we were hailed by the custom-house officers and boarded by them. The commander of them was the same individual who had escorted me into the city, upon my arrival at Tampico. He inquired if there was not an American passenger, who had two small boys under his charge? I presented myself before him, and he seemed much pleased to meet with me. After some compliments, and a hearty laugh respecting my long beard and travelling apparel, in which he had first beheld me, he and his companions bade me an affectionate farewell, and a happy voyage, without having searched our vessel, as was their duty to do every vessel previous to their leaving for sea.

The captain of the schooner had expressed some apprehensions of an examination of his vessel, and, after the departure of the polite officers, I informed him that he owed all of his thanks for his escape to my little nephews.

The pilots next took us in tow, thirty of whom were seated in a boat behind their oars, to row us across the sand

bar at the mouth of the river. Their captain said that the tide was at ebb, and that it was dangerous crossing. However the word was given, and up went the anchor and sails, and we were off to sea, not though without having had a narrow escape from foundering.

As the vessel got over the bar, a sea came and rolled her on her beam, the keel striking heavily against the bottom as she surged, which motion brought every soul on board to his knees, or prostrate on the deck. The captain shouted out, in a voice of despair, that we were lost; but the good schooner in her next plunge passed the bar, and did not again strike.

The bar crossed, the captain of the pilots informed us that it was customary for captains of vessels to treat the pilots to whiskey or money, after performing their hard task. Our captain said that he had neither money nor spirits, but that there were two passengers on board who had some wine, and perhaps they would treat the pilots. I unhesitatingly replied to the unthinking and penurious commander, that he was certainly unreasonable to suppose that I would deprive myself and my little family of a few bottles of wine which I had procured for a sea-voyage. The request, or hint of the Captain was an ill omen to me of the hands I had fallen into, and the pilots departed without their accustomed beverage or pay.

The disappointment of my not finding the captain of our vessel a gentleman, was exceedingly mortifying to me, for the otherwise disagreeableness of my situation was to be enhanced by my being under the command of a man I could not respect, and one whom I had reason to expect would act dishonourably towards me, from the description which Mr. Fulton had given me of his performances.

While in Mexico, I anticipated to meet with none but such characters; and indeed I can say that the most serious losses and sufferings which I sustained in that country, were at the hands of my fellow-countrymen, resulting from my

over-confidence in them—and that he in particular by whom I suffered most, was a Virginian, who first took the opportunity of deceiving my deceased brother, and then myself. Nothing but the respect that I entertain for their honourable parentage and relatives, prevents me from publishing their names to the world. However my fellow-citizens at home may content themselves with the statement of the fact that, in Mexico, there are but few Americans, comparatively speaking, who have not had the best of reasons for flying their country. It is yet to be hoped that they may become virtuous men, and good citizens of their adopted land.

I repeat that, in my departure from a country where I had suffered so much fatigue and excitement, from the continued hazard of my condition, it was with unhappy feelings that I had to be confined to the society of the captain of the schooner, without the prospect of enjoying any pleasure. Emaciated by sea-sickness, I resolved to while away my time in the cabin by reposing, and leave him as much as possible to himself.

While thus indulging, on the second day of our voyage from Tampico, Mr. Fulton came into the cabin, and informed me that the captain had said that he would not put us out at the Balize, but would steer for New York. My friend had not more than mentioned the fact, before the faithless man came in himself, and abruptly remarked that he did not intend to be plagued with us, but that he would sail direct for New York. I had not expected him to prove so base, and although taken by surprise, I had the same way of defending myself at sea as I had on land. I hastily unlocked my trunk, and took from it a revolver. I then informed my brave captain that he was not to take me to New York, but that he was to make good his contract with me, or else he or I should have to die.

I furthermore explained to him that, as additional reasons for holding him to a strict compliance with his agreement, his vessel was leaking five hundred strokes per hour, in con-

sequence of the fresh water worm having perforated the hull, while at anchor at Tampico; as also, that one half of his crew were sick. I reminded him, likewise, of my having property at New Orleans, and that to that port only I was determined to go, and that I should disembark at the Balize.

My friend resolutely seconded me in all I said, and the captain very quietly for the next two days kept his bed, saying that he was sick—but Mr. Fulton amused himself by exciting his fears, and listening to his appeals to preserev his life. The captain was not aware that, at that particular period, it was dangerous for any man to attempt to wrong me, for my feelings had for the last nine months always been up to the combating point, and to meet with a disappointment and vexation from him was not very agreeable to my unpleasant condition.

On the evening of the eighth day of our voyage, while my friend and self were seated upon the deck of the schooner, about the hour of early candle-light, we discovered the red luminary of the light-house of the south-east pass. So rejoiced were we, that we at once determined to set up all night, to watch that the steersman would not sail the light down. We were induced to do so for the reason that, on the night previous, a sailor had proclaimed that he saw a light-house, when the captain peremptorily denied the assertion, and steered from the object. Mr. Fulton had often been in and out of the Balize, and was impressed with the opinion that the vessel's course had been set for New York, from the position of the light when seen. This explains the fact that vessels bound for New York, or any other northern port, from Tampico, first steer for the Balize, and thence to their destined port. However, we determined that we should not let go our hold upon the light-house of the S. E. pass, and I did not suffer sleep on that night to close my eyelids.

On the following morning, as soon as an anchorage was

obtained, we let go our anchor, and six of us in all, with the baggage of myself and friend, was put into the long-boat, and I bade the schooner adieu, for a steamboat was in sight up the river of the South East pass. The mate, who accompanied us, said that our voyage in the boat was three miles by sea, and about as far over the surges of the river to the steamer Southerner. The toil of the sailors was incessant; they were much exhausted when they reached their destination, prostrating themselves on the deck of the steamer. My friend and self did not follow the example of our captain towards the pilots, but rewarded the poor men for their trouble and sufferings.

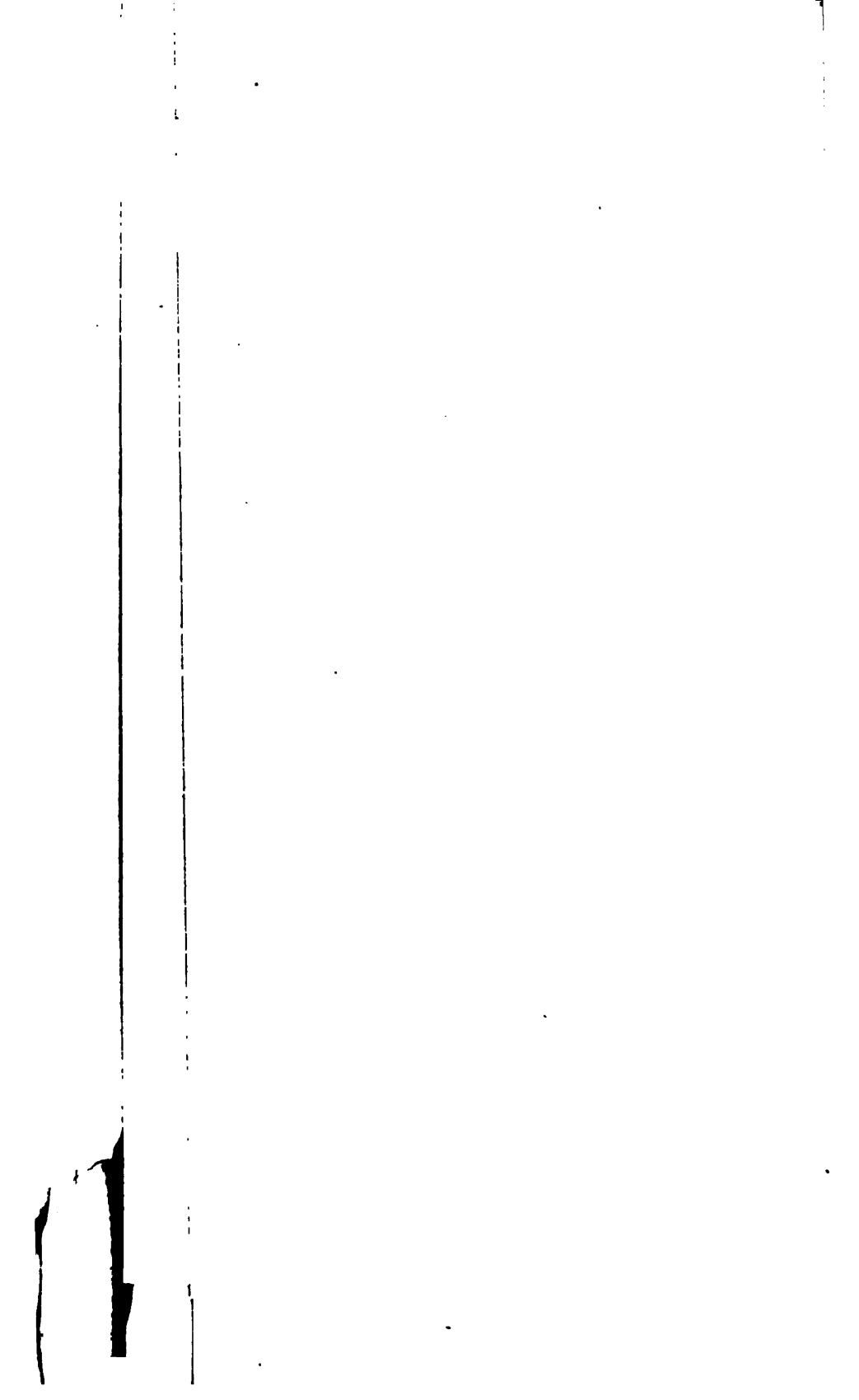
So perilous was the voyage we had made from the schooner to the steamer, that it was imagined by all who saw us that we had deserted the vessel, on account of her being in distress, probably foundering—first, because the sea was rolling—and next, in consequence of the great danger of a small boat attempting to stem the Mississippi river. But we were thus hastened off by the captain of the schooner, he refusing our request to wait until boarded by a pilot. He, no doubt, would have been rejoiced to have seen us go to the bottom, but happily we were safely delivered.

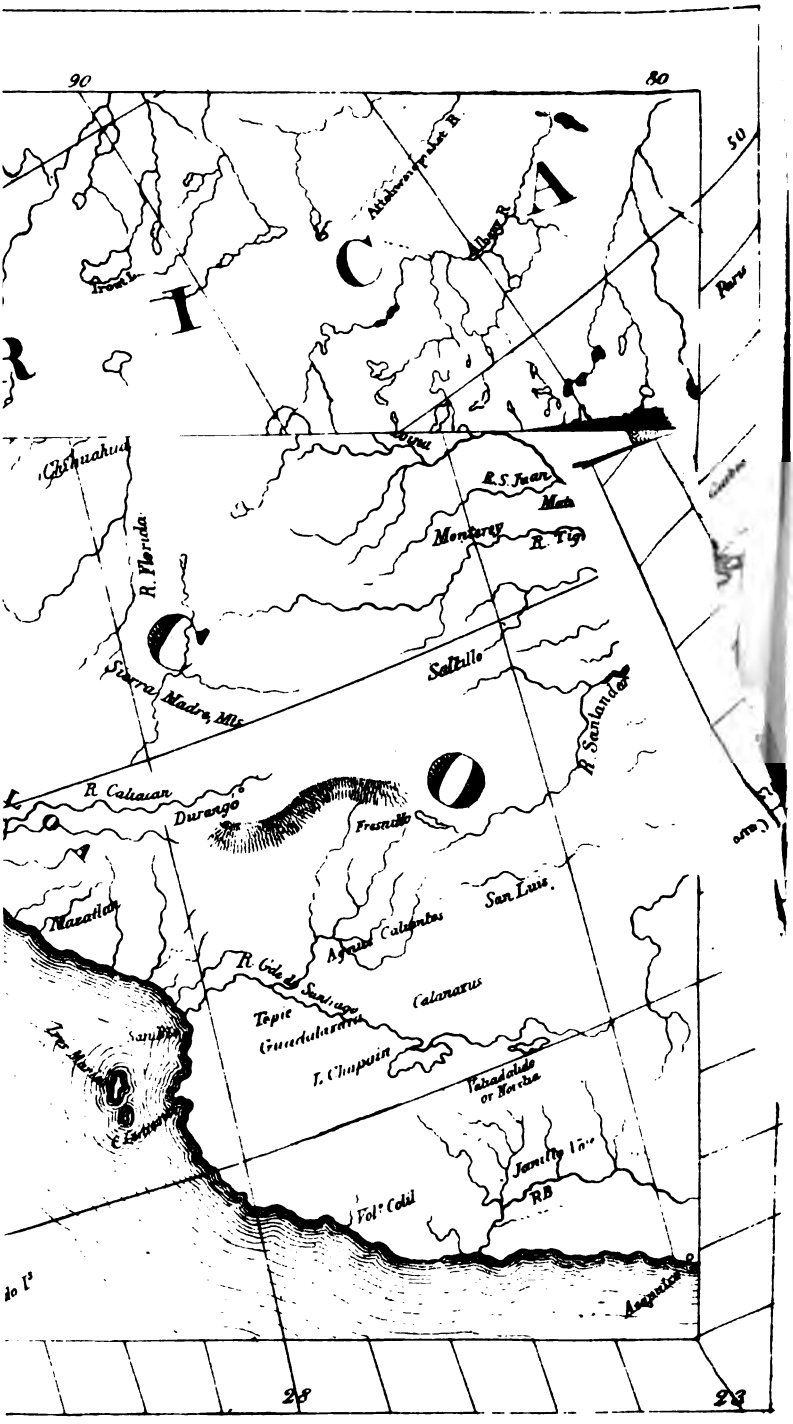
The steamers that are met with at the passes, are tow-boats, employed by the shipping to carry them to and from New Orleans. The Southerner having parted with the ship she had towed to the mouth, on the next day went to sea in search of other vessels. The wind was light, it was slightly raining; and as the land was hardly visible, I was engaged in conversation with a very interesting young lady, when the captain's wife, in much consternation, ran into the cabin, and exclaimed that we were lost! The crew were all in confusion, for the boat was unmanageable, rapidly sheering round in a circle.

It was soon discovered that the rudder was lost, and a temporary fixture having been made by the carpenter, we made for the mouth of the North East pass, and anchored at

a wood-yard. The captain of the Southerner informed us that it would require one week's time to repair the damage, and said that if we were in haste, it would be advisable for us to make for a ship about three miles up the river, which would be taken in tow that evening.

Thus again we had to take a small boat, which delivered us on board the ship in time for the steamer. No other unhappy occurrences or misfortune happened to me during the remainder of my journey—and upon the 2d day of August I landed at New Orleans, on, if my memory serves me right, the tow-boat Phœnix.

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APPENDIX.

OREGON.

View of Oregon. Description of Upper and Lower California, with a map of those countries. Biographies of the Emperor Don Augustin Iturbide, and the Ex-Dictator Antonio Lopez De Santa Anna, comprising rapid outlines of the political history of Mexico and the Texan Revolution.

THERE have been epochs in the history of the world when the eyes of all nations were directed to the advance of power and ambition on the one part, and the overthrow and subjugation of empires on the other. Such were the conquests of Sesostris,—a world won by an Alexander,—the chivalry of the Crusaders,—the freak of fortune of Charles the V.—the triumphs of Napoleon,—and the wide-spread military dominion of the Isles of Britain.

Such revolutions in the Christian, social, and political amelioration of the condition of mankind, can, without the possibility of a doubt, be divined to have been the finger of God, conducting the fallen race of man through his own ignoble gore, from a groveling and benighted condition to the more glorious image of his Maker.

It cannot be denied that the discovery of America by Columbus was an epoch, and it is equally true that the crisis of the revolution of British America was the commencement of an "*age of reason*," in the history of nations, that must enlarge and spread its benign influence until it mantles the whole earth, proclaiming freedom and liberty of conscience to the oppressed and enthralled of mankind; and he is wanting in discernment, who does not perceive that England has been made the great pioneer to prepare the way in new and barbarous regions, for the introduction of that last

and greatest era—the conquest of tyrants and bigots, by the magic and redeeming influence of *reason and principle!* But for a want of faith by the chief priests, scribes, and pharisees, Christ was crucified, and Jerusalem devastated by the Romans. England then should take warning; for by a stubborn opposition to the divine advent of this last and greatest ray of light, the republic of America, by the all-powerful principles of the sacred Bill of Rights of '76, will dismember her colossal empire, and not leave one stone upon another at the footstool of her oppression.

The march of mind is onward, and *great principle*, the pillar of cloud by day, and of fire by night, will triumph in its career. The arm of Jehovah, covered by the thick bosses of his buckler, will give liberty to the captive and freedom to the oppressed of every clime. Whilst the tottering thrones of kings, guarded with bayonets, attempt to shield their power by deceitful and corrupt diplomacy, principle will prove them, and cause them to bow their heads at the altar of liberty. And should the Republic of the United States be threatened with enemies and alliances against her peace and happiness; her trust, as well as her alliance, will be with the God of battles, who will lead her on to glorious victory; extending the "area of freedom," mantling her conquest with the stars and stripes, and annexing her peaceful acquisitions after the policy of her constitution.

By the extension of such views, it is not then strange that the attention of all christendom should be directed to that vast extent of country, lying west of the United States, embracing a coast of great length along the Pacific; a country which, from the extent of its rivers, the number of, and valuable minerals of its mountains, as well as for the richness and variety of the products of its soil, should claim the protection of laws and civilization.

The country of western America, as a portion of God's heritage to man, has, until dates of recent period, been inhabited only by the savage, and roamed over by the brute

creation—never having known civilized human beings, except in the occasional visits of the adventurous hunter, or the searching explorer, who have never attempted to reduce the face of nature to that dominion designed by the all-bountiful Creator when he proclaimed, that by the sweat of man's brow the earth should be tilled.

The Pacific coast of North America, which more immediately interests the American public, as the first and greatest proprietors of its *terra firma*, is at present comprehended in what is known as Oregon territory. The country lying to the north of fifty-four degrees and forty minutes, is denominated the British possessions; that to the south as far as latitude forty-two, is known as Oregon, and south of the latter parallel, California stretches far into the torrid zone,—its southern extremity, Cape San Lucas lying in the twenty-third degree of north latitude.

The extent of coast of the above three great divisions of country, is about three thousand miles, breasting an interior territory of every variety of climate, soil, and productions. The British possessions occupy the frigid zone, Oregon and Upper California the temperate, and the southern ex-extreme of Lower California the torrid zone.

The Oregon country is supposed to extend from Cape Mendocino on the south, to Cape Flattery on the north, lying south-west of the Island of Quadra and Vancouver—the whole coast presenting a line nearly due north. The country of Oregon is calculated to contain about four hundred thousand square miles, and capable of supporting two hundred millions of inhabitants.

The Columbia river, the largest of all the streams of Oregon, is formed by the junction, at the distance of two hundred and fifty miles from its mouth, of the Lewis and Clark rivers; the latter rises at the north, and the former has its origin at the south.

The Columbia river is said to receive nearly all the waters which rise in the Rocky Mountains, and flow west

through this territory. The river enters the Pacific by two mouths. The promontory at the north is called Cape Disappointment; that to the south, Cape Adams. The Columbia does not, at all times, afford a safe harbour, and is a stream of difficult, and often hazardous navigation, in consequence of the number of shoals and rocks in its bed. North of the Columbia, in the Straits of Fuga, there are several good harbours for small vessels, whilst further south, at all times, navigation is rendered dangerous by the prevailing south-west winds, which drive the surges of the sea over high rocks and shallow bars.

In the fifty-third degree of north latitude, rises the headwaters of one of the tributaries of the Columbia, the Canoe river; and what is remarkable, as one of the wonders of nature, connected with this stream, is, that only a few feet from the lake of the Canoe river, is another similar lake, from whence flow the waters of the Athabasca, which enters into, and connects with the waters of the Arctic Sea, Hudson's Bay, and the Canadian lakes; thus most wonderfully exhibiting, in a deep cleft of the great dividing ridge, separating the east from the west, between the two volcanic peaks of Mount Brown, one thousand six hundred feet of high, and Mount Hooker, of one thousand five hundred feet terrific sublimity above the sea—standing in majestic grandeur, like two great towers protecting the pass—the "Punch Bowl," from whence flows the pure, fresh, liquid element of the mountain, to mingle in the salt floods of two opposite oceans, forming, *at once*, a connecting link between the old and new world. Through this wonderful pass, the English carry on their trade from the Pacific coast, almost entirely by water, to Montreal in Canada, and to Fort Factory on Hudson's Bay.

With the foregoing succinct views of the extent of the territory of Oregon, and its facilities for navigation, and extensive inland commerce, it was frequently impressed upon my mind, while on the Pacific coast, that it was strange my fel-

low-citizens of the United States did not awake to their true interests, and wrest from foreign possession their justly acquired territories, so improperly detained from them, in contravention of treaty guarantees, and the rights of occupancy. Although the harbours north of the Columbia river are not the best or largest on the coast, yet, from the easy navigation of the rivers and lakes which empty into the Pacific, upon the one hand, and flow into the Atlantic, upon the other,—making an almost entire and unobstructed navigation from ocean to ocean—it is highly probable that this route may be made to command the best part of the commerce with China and the East Indies; and, unless our government recover and maintain its rights in the country of Oregon, we may be prepared to relinquish our expectations of establishing a profitable over-land trade with the Pacific. The tardy policy of the government would render the acquisition of the bay and port of San Francisco of little use to the nation, in competition with British capital and enterprise on this natural route. And unless a decided and energetic policy be adopted, in reference to the great object of trans-continental commerce with the Pacific—a policy overcoming all obstacles in the attainment of an object of such transcendent national importance—we may be prepared to surrender California likewise, and, with it, those vast commercial enterprises, to the cupidity of our British friends, and their determination to circumscribe our power and advancement.

When we remember that the discovery of this continent, by Columbus, was the result of an attempt to find a passage to the East Indies, for commercial benefits, and notwithstanding a vast continent blocked up the high-way to the rich stores of those regions, eager enterprise was ever vigilant in searching for some strait or narrow sea, by which the goal could be gained, and the wealth of the far-east flooded into the coffers of the avaricious west. Not a bay was seen, nor a river discovered, but what the watchful navigator, ever possessed of the single object of a

western-passage to the east—would, amidst the shouts of his mariners, embrace the delusion, that this or that, was the desired, long-sought for passage.

In 1542 the Spaniards, having possession of the Philippine Islands, it gave to the merchants of that people the monopoly of the trade with China. But, in 1616, the promontory of Cape Horn was discovered and sailed round, which had the effect to draw from the Atlantic coast of the Spanish Main, hordes of English and French bucaniers, who had been, by actual license, or silent consent of their several governments, encouraged to depredate upon Spanish commerce, and plunder their towns.

The powers of Europe, unable at all times to compete with Spain in open warfare, upon the ocean, stealthily engaged in freebooting and piracy upon their merchant-ships, entertaining the hope that thereby Spain might be ultimately weakened in marine power and wealth, and her commerce gradually destroyed. It has been said that "the efforts of the English and their government, to establish commerce with the Spanish dominions in America, have, in fact, been the principal causes or motives of all the wars between those nations since the sixteenth century."

The effect produced by the discovery of Cape Horn, resulted also in the sailing directly across the Pacific to Asia and the Indies; and thus, while the commerce of the Spaniards was perpetually harassed on the high-seas by English and French pirates, the ports of the eastern world were thrown open to the universal trade of all commercial nations.

Coeval with the advance of commerce, the settlement of colonies on the eastern coast of North America, by different European nations, was in regular progression. England had acquired possession of the present Atlantic coast of the United States, and, with the immense advantage, already secured to her commercial interests, has never abandoned the idea of discovering a near passage to the Pacific, by

way of the north-west, having repeatedly fitted out exploring expeditions to navigate the Arctic sea. In the spirit of gain, which she evinces in the acquisition of new territories in disregard of the rights of others, and with the most flimsy pretexts, it would seem that her ambition can never be satiated till she has spread her arms over all the shores.

It is not intended here to discuss the validity of our title to Oregon. On that subject there is but one opinion with intelligent and patriotic citizens of this country, and that is, that our title is clear, just and indefeasible, and that the pretensions set up by our adversaries, are unreasonable, and untenable in their character. To procrastinate the settlement of the Oregon dispute, the British government has resorted to every subterfuge within the range of pettifogging diplomacy —her only object being to achieve by artifice, negotiation, or chance, some advantage, whereby she may acquire a sufficient footing on the Pacific coast, to thwart the true policy of our government, and promote the interests of her own, at the expense of her neighbours. If a chain of communication can be made through the St. Lawrence and the lakes, and by land or water across the continent, it is as practicable to British capital as to American, to secure the over-land commerce of the Western Ocean. The day is not distant, when British ships will take in cargo at Liverpool, in England, and discharge, without transhipment, in the harbours of Lake Superior, and her magnificent transatlantic steamers, after ploughing through three thousand miles of ocean, will be seen steaming their way through our noble rivers and inland seas, as many thousand miles into the interior of the continent, distributing the wealth, enterprise and population of England through the very heart of the wilderness. The great ship-canal, overcoming the rapids of the St. Lawrence, now nearly completed, and the enlargement of the Welland canal, around the falls of Niagara, will enable ships of six hundred tons burthen to accomplish this voyage. This chain of improvements are

among the most stupendous works ever projected, and their future object will be more fully developed in the coming commercial contests between the merchants and governments of the two countries.

An important crisis is evidently approaching, in the history of our transatlantic rival; a great contest is going on vigorously, for manufacturing and commercial supremacy. To these sources of enterprise she is mainly indebted for her hitherto pre-eminent prosperity, and the present prop of her power; she fears no other competitor but America, and with these convictions in rapid progress of fulfilment, it is not strange that a great struggle should be maintained, with every resource at her command, to circumscribe our commercial activity, and secure to herself the monopoly of every new and profitable avenue of enterprise. But our government and people seem to appreciate her designs; and, however tardy we may be in opposing obstacles to their accomplishment, or in asserting and maintaining our rights, the presiding divinity of our republic seems to have decreed that every thing calculated to advance the progress of her favoured people shall triumph over all opposition.

The prompt and decided action of the present administration at Washington, so confidently looked for, after the pledges of Mr. Polk, will secure the speedy and peaceable settlement of the Oregon question. Great Britain will not go to war; her cabinet well know that in the existence of peace between their government and the United States, depends the peace of Europe and the world. Let the contest but commence, and whatever victories may be achieved, or societies devastated on either side, the annexation of all British America to the United States, will be the inevitable consequence, and new and independent powers will be erected in the British Indies and the islands of the sea, while the political influence of the contest, operating upon the minds of the degraded and starving millions at home, cannot fail to shake the foundations of the throne itself, if not

to overturn the time-worn fabrics of European monarchy and despotism, giving place to the irresistible genius of democratic constitutions. France is far better prepared for republican government to-day, than in the days of Voltaire and Napoleon; and the factious demagogue, O'Connell, with his misled but oppressed followers, will embrace the earliest opportunity to put the ball of revolution in motion.

CALIFORNIA.

This country has, within the last few years, excited an increased degree of interest throughout the commercial world, but more especially with the citizens of the United States. The American people have been led to give a greater degree of attention to California recently, in consequence of the removal there of a large number of American immigrants, originally settlers in Oregon, who left the latter region in consequence of the superiority of the soil and climate of the former. The avowals of the British government too, with reference to Oregon—their recent attempt to purchase California clandestinely, from Santa Anna—and the evidently determined policy of the Crown of Great Britain to monopolize the prospective commercial intercourse with the Pacific, by limiting our possessions upon that coast to a small extent of sea-board, of little value to the American immigrant, as an agricultural country, and destitute of valuable harbours to shelter our commerce, or to serve as adequate depots for an extensive overland trade with the Pacific.

These designs of the British ministry, and their imperious language to the United States, have rendered our people and government more alive to their interests, while British poli-

cy on this continent, and foreign interference from whatever source, is daily becoming more obnoxious. The "non-interference doctrines" of Mr. Munroe, put forth during his administration, have been revived in the action of the government upon the Texas question, and met with a hearty response from the entire American public.

After Hernando Cortes had subdued Mexico, and established himself in the ancient city of the Montezeumas, he extended his conquests far to the west, and having made his way to the Pacific, built a fleet with which to explore for new discoveries. The fleet was put under the command of Diego Hurtado de Mendoza, who sailed along the coast north-west, as far as San Jose, in latitude twenty-seven.

But this expedition having proved disastrous, Cortes himself took command of a squadron, and sailed to the north-west in search of new countries, and on the 3d of May, 1535, anchored his vessels in a bay upon which he bestowed the name of Santa Cruz. This bay is situated upon the south-east coast of what is now known as Lower California. And thus it is, California had for its discoverer one of the most renowned of the early adventurers in the new world; and now, at a period of more than three hundred years from its discovery, is but just beginning to excite interest among civilized men.

The country of California lies between the 22d and 42d parallels of north latitude, and is divided in two parts. The northern portion is called New, or Upper California, and the Southern, Old, or Lower California, the dividing line being about latitude thirty-two.

LOWER CALIFORNIA.

The peninsula of Lower California, it will be perceived, on reference to the map, is a narrow strip of land, extending far to the south-east, and is washed upon its eastern shore by the Gulf of California, while the vast waters of the Pacific dash their surges against its mountainous coast on the west.

This peninsula is about seven hundred miles in length, and only one hundred and thirty in its greatest breadth on the north, with a mean width of about ninety-five miles, gradually diminishing as it extends southward, until it reaches its extremity, formed by two bold promontaries, Cape Palmo on the east, and Cape San Lucas on the west.

Lower California has a most uninviting face of country, having a high rocky range of hills running the entire extent of the peninsula, generally bordering upon its western coast. The valleys are few, narrow, and sandy; and, owing to the unfrequency of rains, are unproductive, unless the location is such as to admit of irrigation. All the irrigated lands of California, as well as Mexico, whether rich or poor, are generally very productive. In the northern portion of Lower California, it sometimes happens that rains do not fall for years at a time, while to the south, towards the capes, there are generally copious and refreshing showers during the months of June, July and August.

The western coast of the peninsula is high, dangerous, and rocky, affording but insecure anchorage for vessels; while not a stream of any magnitude enters into the ocean on that side, and fresh water is not found in any quantities near the coast. The harbours on the Pacific, are at Bay la Magdalena, and Port San Quintin; the latter has fresh water in the vicinity. The eastern shores are low, and

without good harbours, the waters of the gulf being shallow, and only navigated with danger by the smaller class of vessels.

That portion of Mexico which borders upon the Gulf of California, east of the peninsula, was originally divided into two provinces, but is now comprehended in one, called the department of Sonora and Sinaloa, under the government of Gen. Urea. Those territories were originally but thinly inhabited, but are now, from the mountains to the sea-shore, quite as numerously populated as any other portions of Mexico—a result attributable to the more extensive opening of the veins of silver in that department, and the greatly increased foreign trade of Guamas and Mazatlan—in the last of which the population has trebled, since the year 1835. There are not less than two hundred Americans at Mazatlan. The port of Guamas is in lat. 23° 40′, and although a better harbour and safer anchorage than at Mazatlan, in lat. 27° 40′, yet the latter has a greater commerce than any other Mexican port on the Pacific. The department of Sonora and Sinaloa has a rich and very productive soil, with more numerous and serviceable rivers and water-courses than any other portion of Mexico. In the upland region, cotton is cultivated, whilst maize and wheat grow to perfection, and upon the rivers sugar-cane grows in luxuriance, without replanting. The sugar planter has only to cut his cane, transport it on the backs of his mules to the mill, where it is crushed and prepared by means of a very rude wooden crushing machine, altogether used in that country.

Lower California has long been celebrated for the pearl stones contained in the oyster taken on its coasts. It is said that the pearl fishery in the Gulf of California has given to the crown of Spain the greatest portion of its royal wealth. The pearl is taken there at great hazard of life by the Indians, who dive to astonishing depths in pursuit of it. The divers are sometimes drowned, and at others destroyed by the furious sharks of those waters. The Connackers of

INDIANS DIVING FOR PEARL-OYSTERS IN THE GULF OF CALIFORNIA.

the Sandwich Islands, are said to be the most expert divers, and can swim farther, and remain longer under water, than any other people of the Pacific. Diving-bells have been ineffectually used in pearl fishing; yet it is highly probable that the more recent invention of gum-elastic waterproof suits, with respiring tubes, may be successfully substituted, saving great loss of life, and producing much more profitable results. The pearl oyster is found between the crevices of the rock, at the bottom of the sea.

The hills and mountains of Lower California are only productive of the precious metals; and the mines, though of ancient date, were not extensively explored, and are but little worked. Near the town of Angelles there is a gold mine said to be very rich. In the mining districts of other parts of Mexico, gold is not obtained unmixed with silver, but in California both ores are found in distinct deposites, independent of any other metals, as in some parts of the United States.

The sea of Cortes, so called by the early navigators, afterwards named Mar Vermejo by the Spaniards, and now known to the world as the Gulf of California, is an arm of the Pacific extending the whole length of the peninsula of Lower California, and separating it from the main land, with an average width of near one hundred miles. It receives the Colorado of the west at its head, in latitude 32°, and contains several fine islands, of which Carmen and Tiburon are the principal. In early times this gulf was the retreat and rendezvous of the Dutch pirates who infested the Pacific.

The climate of Lower California is uniformly that of the torrid zone, the soil producing all the fruits grown in tropical regions. The country is considered healthy, and indeed, the severities of sickness known upon the eastern coast, are never felt on the Pacific shores of North America. San Blas has been the most unhealthy of any Pacific port, yet the Mexican vomito of Vera Cruz has never made its ap-

pearance there. Mr. Peck, an American gentleman previously spoken of, who has resided at San Blas and its vicinity for eight years, states that no sickness or epidemic is there periodical, as at Vera Cruz, Tampico, and New Orleans, and that such things are only known occasionally, in the lapse of years.

Lower California is supposed to contain from four to five thousand inhabitants. No correct census was ever taken. There are but few Mexicans or foreigners among them, the population being principally Indians, natives of the country.

UPPER CALIFORNIA.

This country was discovered in the year 1539, by an expedition commanded by Francisco de Ulloa, which was fitted out for the purpose of making discoveries by the ambitious and enterprising Cortez, very soon after the conquest of Mexico. The first permanent Spanish settlement was made in the year 1769, at the present town of San Diego, in latitude 32° and 41'.

Upper, or New California, extends along the Pacific from latitude thirty-two, to Cape Mindocino in latitude 40° and 19', and from the coast to the east, as far as the boundaries of the north-eastern departments of New Mexico. The exact area of Upper California is at present undefined, and the interior has been but inadequately explored.

The bays and harbours on this coast are numerous and capacious. Among the latter, the principal are the ports of San Francisco, situated on the bay of that name, Monterey and San Diego, and several others of lesser note. San Carlos de Monterey is the capital of California, and has a fine harbour and considerable commerce.

It was at Monterey that a demonstration was made, in 1842, by the United States Pacific squadron, under command of Commodore Jones, who, understanding that a treaty had been negotiated by the agents of the British government with Santa Anna, for a transfer of California to Great Britain, and that an English fleet was about to sail for Monterey, to consummate the purchase, deemed it his duty to resist the anticipated encroachment, and took possession of Monterey for the purpose. It has been suggested, that the intelligence imparted to Commodore Jones was false, and intended to deceive that officer and induce the capture of Monterey, in order to afford Lord George Paulet, the British Admiral, an authoritative precedent, which would enable him to plead the doctrine of estopel, in case of American interference, in his contemplated seizure of the Sandwich islands. Be that as it may, the islands were seized without the shadow of just cause, and but for the demonstrations of indignation, so universally manifested in this country and Europe, in consequence, the great stopping place in the highway of the Pacific would now have been another English Gibraltar, second in maritime importance to *no other* point protected by the British flag. Nearly coeval with this transaction, was the English crusade against China, so familiar to the world,—a crusade which, it can be demonstrated, was designed to render the Celestial Empire solely tributary to British commerce and traffic. In each of these attempts she was, at least temporarily, defeated. But when we view the transactions with scrutiny, there is an obvious connexion between the Chinese war, the Sandwich Island affair, and her palpably unwarrantable and contumacious attitude in reference to Oregon. She has pettifogged us out of our territory on the north-east, and taken possession of the strong points on that frontier, by which she can easily protect the lower provinces. She has fortified the Lake frontier and filled Canada with her troops. She is opening a line of communication for steam ships, from

Liverpool to the western extremity of Lake Superior; and if she maintains her position in Oregon, a rail-road to the Pacific and a line of steamers via the Sandwich Islands to China, will throw into her lap all the European, if not the American commerce, with the eastern and southern coast of Asia.

Besides the places hitherto enumerated on the California coast, there are the harbours of San Pedro, Santa Cruz and Punta de los Reyes. But the most celebrated of all, and probably the most superior on the American continent, is the harbour of San Francisco, situated upon the beautiful and capacious bay of that name, in latitude 37° 55'. This harbour gives to California, with its fine climate and productive soil, great and incalculable advantages over any other country of the western coast, because it presents commercial facilities of so commanding a character, as to render it, in the hands of an enterprising people, the great depot of the Pacific. It will be to that coast, if in the possession of the Anglo-Americans, what New York is to Atlantic countries, the great emporium of commerce and civilization, and ere another century shall have passed away, a wealthy, populous, and powerful empire, will have arisen on the Pacific, and San Francisco will rival many of its Atlantic neighbours.

Although this harbour is equal to any other in the world, until recently it has been but little known, except as a resort for pirates. It is now often visited by navigators, and for some time has been an important depot for the vessels engaged in the whale fishery. Should California remain under the dominion of Mexico, which is neither a naval nor commercial power, with a selfish and isolated colonial policy, jealous of the innovations of enterprise and civilization, and better satisfied with the gains of an illicit trade and domestic free-booting, than the legitimate profits of an enlarged, liberal, and honest intercourse with the world, San Francisco would remain a small, unimproving, and decaying old

town, and the rich country around it an undeveloped waste. But the all-wise Being, who created the sea, as well as the earth, for the dominion of man, doubtless intended, in his own fullness of time, to render the beautiful waters of San Francisco of corresponding benefit to his intelligent creatures, and will cause them to answer the evident designs of nature. Time, in its onward course, has been constantly developing new points and circumstances, which, however unimportant in themselves, when taken in connexion with others, have eventually filled a large space in the history of the world; and when we look at the history of empire throughout the world, the progress of population, wealth, and civilization to the west, the already rapid American emigration to California, and the natural and necessary future connexion of that country with the United States, we can but regard it as the great magnet, and the *ultima thule* of the rapid movement of the past—the progress of empire towards the setting sun. Although many mountains and ravines intervene between New Orleans and San Francisco, there are no insurmountable barriers to the construction of a rail-road to connect the two points, and when this gigantic thoroughfare shall be completed, the great and long-sought "north-western passage to the East Indies," will have been discovered. And should American policy prevail on this continent, this route will be found to be the best, most practicable, and shortest to the Pacific, combining advantages in every way superior to all others.

Within the last few months we have made rapid strides towards California; we have annexed Texas, and all the territorial rights and admissions belonging to her government, accrue to the sovereignty of these United States; and our flag already waves triumphantly on the left bank of the Rio Grande. Whatever may be the result of the present question of boundary, between Mexico and the United States of the north, the next movement will carry us to the Pacific. The only boundary question, if any, now existing

between the two nations, is, as to the country beyond the Rio Grande. The title of Texas is as valid to all territory east of that river, as to any other portion of the country. But General Lamar, in his first message as President of the Republic of Texas, claimed all of the country lying west of Texas to the Pacific. And while the Texan commissioner at the court of St. James was negotiating the acknowledgment of the independence of his country by England, Lord Palmerston called the attention of Gen. Henderson, the Texan minister, to the extraordinary claim set up by the President of Texas, and objected to go on with the negotiation, lest the acknowledgment of the independence of the country might be construed to sanction its asserted claim to northern Mexico and California. The commissioner replied, that he had no authority to commit his government on the question of boundary. Nevertheless the independence of Texas was then acknowledged by the British government, and with full knowledge and admission by them of President Lamar's claim. The reasoning of Lord Palmerston was correct, and Great Britain is forever estopped from opposing our future acquisitions in that territory, even by conquest, so long as we leave the question of boundary open, and remain uncommitted upon it.

The rivers of California are not very numerous; the principal streams are the Sacramento, a large fine body of water which discharges into the bay of San Francisco, and the Colorado (Red) river, which empties into the Gulf of California. The Colorado rises near the head waters of the Rio Grande del Norte; and while the one fertilizes a vast region west of the great chain of mountains, the other for more than one thousand miles forces its way through a mountain range, and at last disembogues its waters on the opposite side of the continent, into the Gulf of Mexico.

There are several lakes in the interior plains of California. That called the Utah (salt) lake, is the largest, deriving its saline qualities, doubtless, from the great constituent

part of carbonate of soda, that exists in all the mineral deposits of the volcanic region about it, and of all the lands of Mexico.

The chain of hills which run through the peninsula of California, extend northward, gradually increasing in size, until they acquire the character of mountains, the principal peak of which is called Mount San Bernardin. These mountains are the most western range of California, and are commonly called the Sierra Nevada, or snowy mountains. The greatest breadth of territory, between the mountains and the ocean, does not greatly exceed one hundred miles. The chain of the Cordilleras, or Rocky Mountains of Oregon, extend through this province. These mountains have their peculiarities of character and formation, varying little at different points. At the city of Mexico they are called the Sierra Anahuac, after the ancient name of the valley of the city of Mexico, whilst in other sections they have exclusive appellations.

The country of Upper California, east of the Sierra Nevada, was never taken possession of by the Spaniards, or their successors, the Mexicans; and hence it has remained a comparatively unknown and unoccupied wilderness. In 1835, Mexico abandoned her military posts and church missions in California, and subsequent historical facts abundantly prove that the government intended to relinquish the country—regarding it as the people of Mexico do, as a region too worthless and remote for the expense of its military occupancy, or themselves as too weak to sustain their authority over it. But, after the affair of Commodore Jones, at Monterey, the government sent a small body of troops there, which however have since been driven off, the inhabitants, including many Americans, having made a successful revolt against the government of the province.

The civilized population of California is very small, and limited principally to the towns, the aggregate of which does not exceed five hundred. To the north is the town of

Salvada Rosa, originally founded by the Russians, but now occupied principally by Americans, containing about two hundred inhabitants. On the bay of San Francisco are situated the village of the same name, and the towns of Santa Clara and San Jose, with an aggregate population of about fifteen hundred. Further south is the town of Monterey, with three hundred settlers, and in the vicinity several other lesser places. The most populous town of all California, is that of Pueblo de los Angelos, with about one thousand inhabitants.

The greater part of the population of California belong to the aboriginal Indians, and their mixed descendants. The Indians are generally of the Camanche tribe; who, in this region, are considered more faithful and honest than the common Mexicans at the south, and are better-looking and more intelligent than North American Indians generally. Nevertheless no reliance can be placed upon them, and the trappers and other adventurers in that country, find it necessary to observe the greatest precaution to prevent their attempts at murder and theft.

The mountains of California abound in valuable mineral, containing as they do an extension of the veins of silver that run through the whole range of the Cordilleras to the south. Gold is here found, as in Lower California, independent of any other ores; silver is also abundant. Both metals are obtained by the Indians, who crush the ore between rocks, and then melt it in rude mud furnaces, producing what is called fire silver, an article inferior to the mercury silver, by from twenty to twenty-five per cent., in consequence of the amount of silex left in the bullion. No country is more productive of pure virgin silver than this. The largest specimen in the world was obtained from these mountains, and purchased by the government of Chihuahua, for the sum of five thousand dollars, and may now be seen in the cabinet of minerals, at the capital of that department.

The climate of Upper California varies slightly in tempe-

rature from north to south, but is never excessively cold at any point. In winter snow is sometimes seen as far south as San Francisco, but it soon disappears. The cold of the mountains is somewhat more intense, and the silvery crest of the Sierra Nevada may be seen for several months in the year. From April until November the sky is often overclouded, and the weather tempestuous upon the coast, while the interior is insufficiently blessed with rains.

The soil of Upper California resembles that of all the country south of it, and without regard to quality it may be rendered very productive, upon the borders of the streams or other locations where the lands can be irrigated. All kinds of grain flourish in perfection, and the wheat is said to be the best in the world, and yielding with little trouble the most abundant harvest. Grass is ever verdant and nutritious, rendering California one of the best grazing countries on the globe.

Neither in Upper nor Lower California can cotton be grown to perfection, in consequence of the climate being alternately too hot or cold, too dry or too damp. In the southern part of the lower province, it occasionally happens that years elapse without rain; while in the upper province it is too wet during the three months of the rainy season, and the cotton vegetates too luxuriantly; and, on the other hand, in the dry region, the staple is short and of a muddy complexion, like all cottons cultivated in tropical regions. The author has seen cotton growing in the departments of Sonoro and Sinaloa, and although in the same parallel of latitude of the famous cotton region of Texas, it does not, under the most favourable circumstances, attain the perfection of the poorest article cultivated in the United States, but is of the same character of all the cottons grown south of the Rio Grande river.

By the annexation of Texas, the United States will secure the monopoly of the cotton trade, rendering thereby all manufacturing countries tributary to her for the supply

of the raw material; and it only remains for the American people to foster this branch of agriculture, and retain the control of all the cotton territory on the North American continent, to render this nation eventually the most wealthy and powerful on the globe.

Bountiful nature has, in no other country, lavished its stores of every kind as in the United States, and its people should be thankful and happy. The minerals of the middle states, are imbedded in mountains of coal; whilst the hill sides are clothed with thick forests, the sand, the lime, the soap-stone, and fire-earth, is ever present for fluxing and rendering the ores to metals.

The trappers and Indians represent the unoccupied country east of the Sierra Nevada, as the most inviting to the agriculturist, and better capable of supplying the wants of civilized life, than that upon the coast. Streams of water are there more abundant, and lakes and springs, some valuable for their saline qualities, spot the earth for the benefit of animal creation; while, in the growing season, the dews of heaven descend in ample quantities to promote the growth of vegetation. That portion of California most known, is not remarkable for its agricultural inducements; yet it is abundantly rich in minerals, and possesses greater commercial advantages than any other country on the western coast of America. The greater part of the territory lying between the Sierra Nevada and Texas, remains yet to be explored and settled, when it will yield the most bountiful returns to civilized and christian man.

As it regards the general history and state of society in California, it cannot be otherwise than uninteresting to the general reader; and if these outlines shall contribute to awaken a degree of interest in the affairs of the western portion of our continent, commensurate with the importance of the subject, the author of these travels will be amply rewarded for his time and expenditures, while travelling through the perilous and unfrequented roads of Mexico.

Sr. D. AUGUSTIN ITURBIDE.

EX-EMPEROR OF MEXICO.

BIOGRAPHY OF ITURBIDE,

EX-EMPEROR OF MEXICO.

The world is familiar with the career of Don Augustin de Iturbide, as the first and only crowned head that has occupied a throne in North America since its settlement by Europeans; and, what is more remarkable, he was elevated by the free and almost unanimous voice of his countrymen, from the station of a citizen to the office and prerogatives of a monarch.

Iturbide was born in the year 1785, in the town of Valladolid, near the Pacific coast of Mexico; and sprang from one of the oldest and most respectable Castilian families of Jalasco, who had always occupied an important position in the country, and were not less distinguished for their affection for the people of Mexico than their adherence and loyalty to their sovereign down to the period of successful revolution.

The early instruction of Iturbide was very judiciously attended to, and, although it was impossible for him to acquire, in Mexico, what would be regarded, in Europe, a brilliant education, he easily attained all the solid acquirements suitable to the highest sphere of the politician or soldier. He exhibited, at an early age, very commanding talents, and the history of his subsequent life must satisfy the world, whether they were honourably or advantageously exercised. His career commenced in a very important era of his country's history, and the great commotion which then agitated Mexico has not yet subsided.

The subjugation of Mexico, by Cortes, was the most unjust and bloody conquest that marked the settlement of this continent by Europeans. At this period the natives of that country were in a state of civilization, far in advance of the

other aboriginal nations of America. The arts were in a high state of advancement, and the civil government of the country was conducted with success and moderation. Centuries did not efface the traditions of Spanish outrages, the cruelties and treachery so wantonly practised in the overthrow of the Montezumas; and it had constantly required the most austere military government to keep the natives and creoles in subordination. The mixed castes of Mexico and the original inhabitants have ever entertained the keenest hatred for the Spaniard; and their antipathies were increased, down to the time of the revolution, by the fact, that the offices and emoluments of government were for the most part distributed among the Europeans.

The success of the revolt of the British American colonies against the mother-government, on account of its usurpations, and the birth and growth of the new republic of the United States, had a great effect in strengthening and developing the elements of revolution, which existed to as great, or greater extent in the Spanish colonies of North America. Nevertheless, when it was understood by the Mexicans, that the council of Seville had declared war against France, they firmly adhered to the fortunes of the Spanish king, Ferdinand VII., and refused to acknowledge allegiance to Joseph Bonaparte. Iturigary was then viceroy of New Spain—a popular man with the natives and creoles, but equally unpopular with the Spaniards. The latter generally favoured allegiance to Joseph Bonaparte, and, setting on foot a conspiracy, in conjunction with the French and Europeans generally, succeeded in deposing Iturigary and elevating a Spaniard by the name of Venegas in his place, who, in consequence of his outrages, became excessively odious to the friends of the former viceroy.

The regard which recent events had inspired among the population towards Ferdinand—the hatred of the Spaniards who had deserted him—the injustice done to Iturigary, and the hateful conduct of Venegas, had all combined to pre-

pare the way for violence, and but a short time elapsed before conspiracies were formed for the purpose of exterminating the Spaniards. A general insurrection was planned, to take place all over the country at once, and was only prevented by accidental discovery.

About this time young Iturbide was in the confidence of the government of Madrid, and held a command in his native province. He was applied to by Hidalgo, a Catholic priest of the rich and powerful province of Guanaxuato, who was the chief conspirator in a plan of revolution set on foot by himself, to take the office of lieutenant general of the revolutionists. The liberal and patriotic character of Iturbide, the influence of his family, and the general confidence which his military reputation would inspire, rendered it an object of the highest importance to secure his cooperation. The plans of Hidalgo were listened to by the young officer, who, satisfied that there was no chance of success, and distrusting the avowed object of the priest and his followers, declined joining in the movement. Hidalgo, thereupon, collected a band of untrained and ignorant adventurers, and commenced his march; but, instead of making a judicious war upon the Spaniards, or against the government, he plundered and pillaged wherever he went. His career lasted but briefly, and terminated in his death; his example was left for imitation; and, for several years, similar outrages were constantly practised by parties of adventurers, who only sought to plunder and devastate.

From 1810 to 1816, Iturbide held important military commands under the viceroys, and, during that interval, made several successful attempts to disperse those roving parties of robbers, which had frequently inflicted the most appalling and unmerited cruelties, and indulged in the most outrageous excesses of carnage and robbery, under the name of revolution.

One of these bands was headed by a priest by the name of Torres, whose abode, and the head-quarters of his fol-

lowers were established on the summit of the mountain Los Remidios, which was strongly fortified. Here his roving parties brought their "beauty and booty;" for neither wealth nor female virtue was secure from the ravages of these outlaws. At the rendezvous, Torres kept his harem filled with the most beautiful women, who were constantly singing and shouting praises to their licentious master. He issued the most arbitrary orders to his men, who looked up to him as the source of all power; and, in the pride and exultation of his success and authority, often exclaimed, "*Yo soy xefe de todo el mundo*"—(I command the world.) It was against a demi-savage insurrection, carried on by such men and such means as these, that Iturbide arrayed himself on the side of the government, although he was at this time greatly dissatisfied with Spanish oppression, and sighed himself for the freedom of his country from foreign misrule.

In 1816 he resigned his office in the army, having gained repeated distinction in his military career. This step was taken in consequence of the misrepresentations of several important persons, to the government, against him; and, in order to enable a fair investigation into the truth of the charges. No witnesses, however, could be produced to sustain them, and the most important persons engaged in the prosecution abandoned it, alleging that they had been deceived. In the interval of his retirement, while quietly pursuing his domestic affairs, and attending to the management of his extensive and valuable estates, repeated demonstrations of respect and confidence were showered upon him, and the authorities of the provinces and towns, and the officers of the army, united in an invitation to him, to accept the same office he had resigned. The invitation, nevertheless, was declined, and Iturbide continued in the peaceful avocations of a private citizen, who was tired of the turmoil of contending factions, and the deceits of political life.

The author is mainly indebted to documents and authorities kindly furnished him by the family and friends of the distinguished individual whose history he has attempted to sketch, very briefly; and, as Iturbide has furnished the world, probably, the best narrative of the transactions that immediately preceded the revolution in Mexico, the public will be better gratified with his own statement than one drawn from cotemporaneous and equally partial sources.

"In 1820, (says Iturbide,) the constitution was re-established in Spain. The new order of things, the foment in which the Peninsula was placed, the machinations of the discontented, the want of moderation amongst the supporters of the new system, the vacillation of the authorities, and the conduct of the government and Cortes at Madrid, (who, from the decrees which they issued and the speeches which some of the deputies pronounced, appeared to have determined on alienating the colonies,) filled the heart of every good patriot with the desire of independence, and excited amongst the Spaniards established in the country, the apprehension that all the horrors of the former insurrection were about to be repeated. Those who exercised the chief authority, and had the forces at their command, took such precautions as fear naturally dictated; and those persons who, at the former epoch, had lived by disorder, made preparation for again turning it to advantage. In such a state of things the richest and most beautiful portion of America was about to become again the prey of contending factions. In every quarter clandestine meetings took place, for the purpose of discussing the form of government which ought to be adopted. Among the Europeans and their adherents, some wished for the establishment of the Spanish constitution. They succeeded in realizing their views to a certain extent, but the system was badly understood, and the loose manner in which it was obeyed, indicated the shortness of its duration. There were some who conceived that it ought to undergo modification, inasmuch as the constitution framed

by the Cortes at Cadiz was inapplicable to "New Spain." Others there were who sighed after the old obsolete government, as the best support of their lucrative employments, which they exercised in a despotic manner, and by which they had gained a monopoly. The privileged and powerful classes fomented their different parties, attaching themselves to the one or the other, according to the extent of their political information or the projects of aggrandisement which their imaginations presented. The Americans wished for independence, but they were not agreed as to the mode of effecting it, still less as to the form of government which they should prefer. With respect to the former object, many were of the opinion that, in the first place, all the Europeans should be exterminated and their property given up to confiscation. The less sanguinary would have been contented with banishing them from the country, thus reducing thousands of families to a state of orphanage. The moderate party suggested only that they should be excluded from all public offices, and degraded to the condition in which they had kept the natives of the country for three centuries. As to the form of government, one party proposed a monarchy, tempered by the Spanish or some other constitution; a second party wished for a federative republic; and the partisans of each system, full of enthusiasm, were impatient for the accomplishment of their different objects."

At this important crisis, when the political elements were in commotion—the jealousies of the weak aroused against the opulent and powerful—the apprehensions of the rich excited for their personal safety—the country on the eve of a great organic revolution, the result of which was uncertain, the means unknown—whether the change should be effected by violence and rapine and bloodshed, or by moderation and peaceful compromise of opinion and preferences, no man knew; at this juncture all classes and all parties looked with confidence and solicitude for the action of Itur-

bide. His military reputation was justly higher than any of his countrymen. The army was greatly attached to him. The Spaniards respected his moderation, and were grateful to him for more than once averting the horrors of insurrection in several large districts of country. The natives and creoles entertained the greatest confidence in his patriotism, and believed him ready, at the proper time, and on the proper occasion, to strike for his country's independence. The body politic was disordered, and Iturbide was, by common concurrence of all classes, looked upon as the man for the emergency. Applications were made to him from several provinces to commence a revolution—plans were proposed and information in reference to the capacity of the different sections for defence and military movements, submitted,—the quotas of men, arms, and munitions of war the various departments would furnish, were named; and he became satisfied that the time had arrived for consummating his long-cherished scheme of separating Mexico from the Spanish empire; and, yielding to the desire of his friends, immediately set about perfecting a plan for effecting this great object. At a subsequent period in his life, speaking of this particular crisis, Iturbide remarked, that he saw new revolutions on the eve of breaking out, and his country about to be drenched in blood; that he was led to believe he had the power to save her, and he (therefore) did not hesitate to undertake so sacred a duty.

The latter part of the year 1820 was devoted to this great undertaking, and the whole energies of his mind were bent to organizing and perfecting a plan for separating the viceroyalty of Mexico from the crown of Spain. Disregarding the successful examples of other nations in which reformations and revolutions had been accomplished only at the expense of anarchy and bloodshed and civil war, he attempted the utterance of a plan that should conciliate contrarieties of opinion, overcome prejudices, and compromise all classes

more or less to its support, and thus avoid the horrors of a servile insurrection and the calamities of domestic war.

A few months only were sufficient for the accomplishment of his labours, and on the 21st of February, 1821, he published to the world his immortal plan for the separation of Mexico from the mother-government, and its erection into an independent empire. In this short period he had not only formed the outlines of his project, and enlisted the various contending factions in its support, but procured its ratification by most of the departments of the nation. A more interesting or satisfactory account of the motives that led to the adoption of the sagacious and beneficent "plan of Iguala" cannot be given, than is found in Iturbide's own words, which are as follows:—

"In tracing out this project, (says he,) my aim was to give independence to my country—because such was the general desire of the Americans; a desire founded on natural feelings and on principles of justice. It was, besides, the only means by which the interests of the two nations could be secured. The Spaniards would not allow themselves to be convinced that their decline began with their acquisition of the colonies, while the colonists were fully persuaded that the time of their emancipation had arrived."

The plan of Iguala speaks for itself; and, although there were some radical errors in its doctrines and guarantees, yet, as a whole, it was wisely conceived for the accomplishment of the great and legitimate object of its author—the promotion of the interests and happiness of the Mexican people. It was as follows:

Plan of Iguala.

Art. 1. The Mexican nation is independent of the Spanish nation, and of every other, even on its own continent.

Art. 2. Its religion shall be the Catholic, which all its inhabitants profess.

ART. 3. They shall be united, without any distinction between Americans and Europeans.

ART. 4. The government shall be a constitutional monarchy.

ART. 5. A junta shall be named, consisting of individuals who enjoy the highest reputation in the different parties which have shown themselves.

ART. 6. This junta shall be under the presidency of his excellency the Count del Venadito, the present Viceroy of Mexico.

ART. 7. It shall govern in the name of the nation, according to the laws now in force, and its principal business shall be to convoke, according to such rules as it shall deem expedient, a Congress for the formation of a constitution more suitable to the country.

ART. 8. His majesty Ferdinand VII. shall be invited to the throne of the empire, and in case of his refusal, the Infantes Don Carlos and Don Francisco de Paula.

ART. 9. Should his majesty Ferdinand VII. and his august brothers decline the invitation, the nation is at liberty to invite to the imperial throne any member of reigning families whom it may select.

ART. 10. The formation of the constitution by the Congress, and the oath of the emperor to observe it, must precede his entry into the country.

ART. 11. The distinction of castes is abolished, which was made by the Spanish law, excluding them from the rights of citizenship. All the inhabitants of the country are citizens, and equal, and the door of advancement is open to virtue and merit.

ART. 12. An army shall be formed for the support of religion, independence, and union, guaranteeing these three principles, and therefore shall be called the army of the three guarantees.

ART. 13. It shall solemnly swear to defend the fundamental bases of this plan.

ART. 14. It shall strictly observe the military ordinances now in force.

ART. 15. There shall be no other promotions than those that are due to seniority, or which shall be necessary to the good of the service.

ART. 16. This army shall be considered as of the line.

ART. 17. The old partisans of independence who shall immediately adhere to this plan, shall be considered as individuals of this army.

ART. 18. The patriots and peasants who shall adhere to it hereafter, shall be considered as provincial militia men.

ART. 19. The secular and regular priests shall be continued in the state in which they now are.

ART. 20. All the public functionaries—civil, ecclesiastical, political, and military—who adhere to the cause of independence, shall be continued in their offices, without any distinction between Americans and Europeans.

ART. 21. Those functionaries, of whatever degree and condition, who dissent from the cause of independence, shall be divested of their offices, and shall quit the territory of the empire, taking with them their families and their effects.

ART. 22. The military commandants shall regulate according to the general instructions in conformity with this plan, which shall be transmitted to them.

ART. 23. No accused person shall be condemned capitally by the military commandants. Those accused of treason against the nation, which is the next greatest crime after that of treason to the Divine Ruler, shall be conveyed to the fortress of Barrabas, where they shall remain until the Congress shall resolve on the punishment which ought to be inflicted on them.

ART. 24. It being indispensable to the country that this plan should be carried into effect, inasmuch as the welfare of that country is its object, every individual of the army

shall maintain it to the shedding, if it be necessary, of the last drop of his blood.

Town of Iguala,
24th February, 1821.

The proffer of the crown of the new empire to the reigning family of Spain, was calculated to secure the approbation of the Spanish loyalists, and conciliate the royal family; and, had the latter consulted their true interests, the dignity of the Spanish nation, and the happiness of the Mexican people, the offer would not have been rejected. The guarantee of the Catholic, as the national religion, although in the abstract improper, was nevertheless a wise provision in this instance; for to have made war upon the church, or even neglect its interests, was to enlist an opposition that would have destroyed the whole object of the measure. And while there was offered to the Americans the privilege of enacting their own laws, and participating in all the benefits of the government, there was also guaranteed to the Spaniard a peaceful home, and adequate protection to person and property.

The greatest, and perhaps the only error (under the circumstances) of the new organization, which foreshadowed calamitous results, consisted in the provision which abolished all distinction of castes, and placed all individuals, whether Americans, Spaniards, Africans, or Indians, on equal political footing. It is true, this feature had the effect to conciliate the prejudices and overcome the jealousies of the lower classes, but could the same ends have been peacefully accomplished without its adoption, many evils that have since resulted in Mexico might have been averted. The half-civilized masses in that country, unaccustomed to self-control and the reflection necessary to the judicious exercise of the high attributes of freemen, were entirely unprepared for the change, and, as a natural consequence, their political liberty degenerated into political licentiousness.

Here, again, the author takes the liberty of quoting the eloquent language of Iturbide, in reference to the result of the plan of Iguala, and the consummation of his labours.

"The operation of putting the plan into execution, (says he,) was crowned with the success which I had anticipated. Six months were sufficient to untwist the entangled knot that had bound the two worlds. Without bloodshed, without fire, robbery, devastation, without a tear, my country was free, and transformed from a colony into an empire."

Those Europeans who desired to remain in the country were permitted to do so; and those who held offices, and co-operated in the patriotic effort for independence, were permitted to retain them. After the organization of the provisional government, the most liberal and capable Spaniards were elevated to the highest stations, and participated in all the honours and advantages of the new order of things. Those who preferred were permitted to leave the country, and often liberally aided in doing so; no violence was exhibited towards any who did not approve of the revolution, and their property and persons were respected.

But one thing remained to be done, to complete the perfect independence of the country, and establish the universal authority of the new government, which was the reduction of the royal government at the capital, or its acquiescence in the new organization. This step was honourably and peacefully accomplished on the 24th of August, 1821. by the treaty of Cordova, concluded between Don Juan O'Donoju, Lieutenant General of the armies of Spain, and Don Augustin de Iturbide, as "First Chief of the Imperial Mexican army of the Three Guarantees." Of the authority of the contracting parties to make the treaty of Cordova, a single observation is only necessary. Iturbide, invested with the command of the imperial army, was before the capital, and could easily have reduced it; but, in the alternative he pursued, acted in accordance with the sentiment of the Mexi-

can people. And although O'Donoju was not invested with the special powers of entering into any particular convention, yet he was authorized in all cases to act in accordance with his judgment, for the interests of his sovereign; and, in this instance, he not only conformed to the sentiments of his command, and most of the royal officers in the country, but to the dictates of his own judgment of duty, and his determination no longer to oppose a revolution which had enlisted his sympathies, and he believed to be right. He knew it was vain for him to contend with Iturbide, or his government to oppose the revolution. The Spanish yoke was already thrown off, and the general consulted the highest interests, if not the honour of his sovereign, when he assented to the plan of Iguala, and the stipulations of the treaty. If, by this means, he did not gratify the false pride of a family in whose hands he had placed the crown of the new empire, if they chose to accept it, he at least prevented the improvident expenditure of much blood and treasure on both sides.

The treaty provided for the recognition of the independence and sovereignty of Mexico; that the government should be a limited constitutional monarchy, and the throne occupied by an Emperor, who should fix his court at the city of Mexico. The third article, in accordance with the plan of Iguala, provided for the invitation of Ferdinand VII. to the throne; and, in case of his refusal or denial, of one of his august brothers, in the regular order of succession; and, in case of the refusal or denial of all these respectively, that the national cortes of the empire should designate the individual who should ascend the throne. By the sixth article, a "Provisional Junta of Government" was to be appointed, "composed of men the most eminent of the empire, for their virtues, their station, rank, fortune, and influence,—men marked out by the general opinion," whose number should be sufficiently large to insure wisdom of council and safety of action. It was also agreed that the Junta should elect its president, and appoint a regency, con-

sisting of three individuals, distinguished for their ability and patriotism, who should govern in the name and on the behalf of the monarch, until the vacant throne should be filled. The regency was, immediately on its installation, to convoke the national cortes in the manner prescribed by the "Provisional Junta," and in accordance with the plan of Iguala. These provisions embraced the principal features of the treaty of Cordova; the other guarantees of the former plan were repeated, and some provisions of minor importance added. The general, Don Juan O'Donoju, also agreed to despatch two commissioners, with a copy of the treaty, and his representations thereon, to the court of Spain, which was complied with.

In conformity with the stipulations of the treaty, the Spanish forces capitulated on the 27th of September, and Iturbide entered the city of Mexico. On the same day he nominated the Junta of government, who were immediately installed, and forthwith entered upon the discharge of their official duties. To fill this body, men of the highest reputation were selected from all parties—it being the only chance, under the circumstances, of insuring concert of action, and obeying the direction of public sentiment. Thus far the plans and measures of Iturbide had secured the commendation of the country; the public confidence in his capacity, patriotism, and integrity, was greatly augmented, which was manifested in a highly increased popularity, and the congratulations of his countrymen of all classes and stations. His entry into the capital was like a military triumph, and he was only prevented from being declared Emperor by his resolute remonstrance and refusal. The installation of the Junta was approved, and there seemed to be at this moment nothing in the way of the complete and successful consummation of all his hopes.

The junta had no sooner convened, however, than the aspect was at once changed; this body, filled with persons aspiring to station and power, who were ignorant of the

science of government, but each one of them professing peculiar views, and ostentatiously presenting them, soon fell into disputes, perverted the power with which they were clothed, and gave great offence to the country. The plan was suggested by several of the provinces, that Iturbide should dissolve the Junta, and proceed himself to execute the important duties which that body had neglected; and he was only deterred from doing so, by the apprehension that his conduct might be misconstrued; and because he desired to carry out, as far as possible, the plan of Iguala, and thereby preserve the respect of those nations whose regard and friendship it was his desire to court and cherish, and whose peculiar sentiments of personal prerogative or power would come in collision with his, only from a want of ability to appreciate the necessities of the emergency.

There were men at the capital, some of whom were members of the Junta, who, entertaining private views of emolument, disliked Iturbide, on account of his general success and popularity, and were not slow to enter upon intrigues to destroy him. To this end the prejudices of two opposite factions were excited—the one constituting itself the republican, and the other the Bourbon party—united only in the single purpose of opposing the measures of Iturbide. The former coalesced in the opposition, because they knew that his objections to a republic were insurmountable, as he had repeatedly expressed them to the nation. They have since been published, and are so just and forcible, that both monarchists and republicans will readily appreciate them. "Nature (says the statement on this subject,) produces nothing by sudden leaps; she operates by intermediate degrees. The moral world follows the laws of the physical. To think that we could emerge all at once from a state of debasement, such as that of slavery, and from a state of ignorance, such as has been inflicted on us for three hundred years, during which we had neither books nor instructors, and the possession of knowledge had been thought a suffi-

cient cause for persecution; to think that we could gain information and refinement in a moment, as if by enchantment; that we could acquire every virtue, forget prejudices, and give up false pretensions, was a vain expectation, and could only have entered into the visions of an enthusiast." Such was the eloquent and truthful vindication of Iturbide, for his opposition to the establishment of a republican government in Mexico, and the history of that country for the last quarter of a century has fully attested their justness and propriety.

The Bourbonists, originally in favour of calling a Bourbon to the throne of the empire, after the refusal of the Spanish government to ratify the treaty of Cordova, and acknowledge the independence of Mexico, of course could no longer entertain the hope of realizing their original plans, and were in favour of returning to the allegiance of Spain. The decree of the government of Madrid, annulling the treaty of O'Donoju, was made on the 13th of February, 1822, and had reached the Mexican capital. To acquiesce in the desires of the Bourbon faction, and retrocede from the stand which the Mexicans had taken before the world, was to sacrifice what they had sought for, and partially gained, and to take a step which was impossible, considering the state of public feeling.

At this period Iturbide wielded the power of the army, and was far the most popular man in the country; and against him, as the prominent leader in the new order of things, the whole force of the two factions was bent.

The first duty imposed on the Junta by the organic bases, required that body to frame a proclamation (*convocatoria*) for the assembling of a Congress to form a constitution for the monarchy, prescribing the manner of electing and the number of representatives to be sent by each department. The movements of the Junta were extremely tardy and unsatisfactory. But after wasting a great deal of time a very defective convocatoria was presented; the representation

was unequal, and calculated to give offence to some of the stronger departments; for while a population of fifty thousand, perhaps, were given an over large representation; a district, containing twice the number of inhabitants, and a much greater amount of wealth and civilization, was only entitled to one half as many deputies as the former. The elections were greatly vitiated also. Instead of giving the people of the district to be represented the direct choice of their deputy, or of all the electors who should appoint him, the election was confided to the authorities (*ayuntemientos*) of the principal towns, who acted in conjunction with a limited number of electors to be named by the country districts. The *ayuntemientos* were frequently corrupt, or easily corrupted, and having greatly the majority of electors over those chosen by the country districts, left the selection of the members to Congress entirely in their control. In this way popular suffrage amounted to nothing, and popular liberty was in danger of coming to the same result. The *convocatoria*, however, was accepted by Iturbide in the emergency, as the only alternative, and as there seemed to be no way to remedy its defects except by the action of the congress.

The elections that took place, in pursuance of this proclamation, were the scenes of the most corrupt intrigues and villanous influences of the factions opposed to Iturbide. The members returned were composed, to a great extent, of prominent individuals hostile to his plans, and others so ignorant and servile, as to be made the ready tools of the leaders. Some were persons who had been prosecuted as criminals, and some were Spanish loyalists who had violated their paroles; others were notoriously corrupt,—one was an apostate monk, by the original basis excluded from a seat, and another was the diplomatic agent at the capital of the Republic of St. Salvador, of which he was also admitted in congress as the representative. The grossest frauds had been perpetrated in the elections; individuals

were returned who did not receive a majority of the electoral votes. Remonstrances against the legality of the elections, as well as the returns, were made from almost every department, charging that the law of the *convocatoria* had been violated, and persons returned as members who did not receive a majority of votes. These declared that the elections were a nullity, and that no powers were conferred by the people upon the Congress. The documents were sent to the Executive department, occupied by Iturbide, who was then the generalissimo and admiral-in-chief of the empire. Trusting to the patriotism of a few of the members, and the flattering hope that the anticipated errors of the Congress-elect might be cured by the succeeding one, the remonstrances were not presented to that body, or otherwise acted on.

The first and principal duty of this congress was to frame a constitution for the empire, and provide means for sustaining the civil and military power of the government. Eight months passed away and none of these objects were attained; the constitution had not been touched—no financial measures were adopted, or likely to be; the organization of the judiciary was neglected, the administration of justice had fallen into disrepute, and civil anarchy existed throughout the country. The time was wasted in empty declamation; in making speeches on subjects foreign to the objects for which they were assembled, in discussing what honours or pensions should be paid to insurrectionary chiefs; what titles should be conferred on civil and ecclesiastical functionaries, and a hundred other subjects of no graver moment. The incompetency and folly of the congress rendered it the object of the contempt of the people; the public press exposed its faults, and one of the deputies, Don Lorenzo de Zavalla, since Vice-President of the Republic of Texas, stood up in his place and advocated its reform.

The factions in this body were evidently seeking delay; one party desiring the triumph of the arms of Spain in an

anticipated invasion of the country, and the other bent on a republican government. The army and the people equally detested the dissimulation of the congress, and desired neither submission to Spain on the one hand, nor republicanism on the other. They had the most unlimited confidence in Iturbide, and regarded every manoeuvre of the factionists, of either party, as an attempt to depose him.

In the early part of 1822 the regency of government was composed of five members; the congress, in order to destroy the influence of Iturbide, who was the president of the regency, and his friends in that body, unwarrantably deposed three of the members, leaving one opposed to the president, and consequently annulling his influence and action in the executive capacity. The blow was intended for Iturbide, although the congress did not dare to make war directly upon, or attempt to depose him, from a fear of his popularity and influence with the army. The resolution, deposing the members of the regency, was not only a usurpation of power, not delegated to the legislature, but its adoption was most unjust and precipitate. Without discussion, the resolution was passed at a single sitting, and carried into immediate execution, notwithstanding it had been previously decreed by the congress, that every proposition before them should be read three times, at as many different sittings, before it should be discussed and passed upon. In connection with the resolution it was also proposed to divorce the executive authority and the command of the army. But this proposition, also aimed at Iturbide, and intended to compel him to relinquish either his seat in the regency, or the command of the army, was lost only for want of time.

Nearly two months had elapsed after the regents were deposed; the popular indignation against the congress was aroused to its highest pitch; anarchy, if not domestic revolution, threatened in the interior, and the clamours of the army were becoming daily more alarming. Every body

distrusted the congress, and the departments were urging Iturbide to dissolve that body, if necessary, by force of arms. The attempt to deprive him of the command of the army, or his seat in the cabinet, had greatly excited the fears of the people and increased the tumults of the soldiers, and doubtless was the immediate cause of the event of the 18th of May. The people saw that nothing could be expected from the congress, composed as it was of ambitious demagogues and factious men, who seemed determined to subserve their own purposes, without regard to the fundamental basis already agreed upon; in total contempt of the expressed will of the nation, and at the hazard of the independence of the country. They had failed to form a constitution: they had failed to adopt any of the salutary measures, so indispensable and necessary in the emergency of the occasion: they were quarrelling among themselves, and warring with the regency.

Stimulated by these circumstances, on the night of the 18th of May, 1822, the people and the garrison of the capital proclaimed Iturbide the emperor of Mexico. At the same instant, as if by magic, the entire capital was in a blaze of light; the public square and private edifices were magnificently illuminated; the buildings were decorated with banners, and the balconies were filled with the most respectable inhabitants; every countenance seemed joyful, and the universal shout ascended—"Long live Augustin the First!" The streets presented a compact mass of human life; the city garrison, officers of the army, the leading citizens of the metropolis, and many distinguished men from different sections of the country, thronged the vicinity of Iturbide's residence, and united in the general acclamation. Not a murmur of disapprobation was heard from any source; indeed, the members of the congress, and not all of those, were the only individuals at the capital who did not rejoice in the movement.

The vacant throne of the new empire had already been refused by Ferdinand and his brothers. The alternative

remained for the congress to select the individual who should occupy it; the country was in a high state of excitement, bordering on anarchy; the want of a supreme head was manifest; the congress, whose members were vacillating between republicanism on the one hand, and submission to Spain on the other, had disappointed and deceived the people; popular sentiment had almost unanimously approved the plan of Iguala and the additional guarantees of the treaty of Cordova. Iturbide was the favourite of the nation, and public sentiment had for some time marked him out as the person who should wear the diadem of Mexico.

Although aware of his popularity, and expecting the movement of the people, Iturbide declared to his friends his determination to reject the proffered crown. But he was told by those, "that the movement at the capital was the exponent of the national will; and, to refuse compliance, would be to turn the popular excitement against himself, and to hazard the independence of the country; that anarchy threatened the nation; the congress seemed bent on hastening its destruction, and no other alternative was left; that he had started the ball of revolution, and given independence to the country; he was the author of the plan of Iguala, and had signed the guarantees of the treaty of Cordova that provided the alternative, now the only one left, which the people had adopted in proclaiming him emperor, and that to waver, or refuse to yield to their wishes, and carry out the only plan that could secure the blessings of peace was to sacrifice his labours, sacrifice his friends, and desert the cause of independence."

Whether Iturbide yielded with reluctance or not, to these solicitations of his friends, we have only his own statement. Most men, under similar circumstances, however ambitious for place or honour, would not be very likely to admit that they sought the crown which was offered them, and to which they had no hereditary title. There can be no doubt that the nation regarded him as worthy of it, and if any

Mexican was entitled to it, from services rendered his country, it could not, with justice, have been bestowed upon any other. At any rate, whatever may have been his scruples on the subject, they were so far overcome that he spent the remainder of the night of the 18th of May in quieting the people, and asking time for reflection before his final determination should be announced.

On the following day the regency was convened, and a full meeting present, the subject was presented to them and discussed; and it was unanimously determined that Iturbide should accede to the wishes of the people. The generals and superior officers of the army assembled, and united in the resolution of the regency. The president of the congress, who had received official intelligence of what had transpired, immediately summoned an extraordinary sitting of the congress. The regency and the convention of officers argued that it would be impossible to recede from the steps already taken; that an emperor was to be chosen, and that Iturbide was the man; and, having already dedicated himself to the country, they demanded his compliance with their wishes. Accordingly, both these bodies drew up memorials, addressed to the congress, requesting them to take the subject into consideration. These memorials were signed also by the president of the congress, and presented to that body.

When the deputies convened, the galleries and entrances were crowded with spectators; the place resounded with applauses. In this important moment all was excitement, and the calm of deliberation was prevented. A deputation was immediately appointed to wait on Iturbide, and request his presence; the duty was executed, but Iturbide at first declined to attend at the sitting, adding, that as the congress "were about to treat of him, personally, his presence might be considered as a restraint on the freedom of debate, and a clear and frank expression of each individual opinion." The deputation, however, with several general officers, re-

turned to him, and insisted on his compliance with the invitation of the congress. He yielded to their persuasion, and while repairing, through the immense throng in the street, to the hall in which the deputies were sitting, the horses were removed from his carriage, and the vehicle drawn by the people to the doors of the place, amidst the shouts and vivas of the inhabitants; and, on his entrance, the acclamations were renewed with equal enthusiasm.

Without delay, the question of nomination was debated, and not a single member opposed the measure; all acquiesced in their expressions of its propriety and importance, and but few even questioned the authority of the congress to act on the subject. These were of the opinion that the provinces should be consulted, and a formal concurrence manifested with an enlargement of the powers of the congress for the purpose. Iturbide rose three times to acquiesce in these views, and, with repeated arguments, recommended their adoption. But the majority thought otherwise, and Iturbide was elected emperor, by a majority of seventy-seven members, out of ninety-two, who were present and voted. As was before remarked, all had expressed themselves in favour of his election, and the fifteen who voted in the minority did so under the avowed impression that their powers were too limited, expressing at the same time their opinions that their constituents would be gratified and unhesitatingly sanction the action of the congress.

It has been charged, and is highly probable, that the fears of the deputies were aroused by the excitement of the people, and the presence of the army at the capital; nevertheless, there can be no doubt of the power and duty of the congress to fill the vacant throne; the third article of the treaty of Cordova, which had been fully ratified by the provinces, made it expressly incumbent on that body; and in selecting Iturbide, they were but carrying out the wishes of the authorities, and obeying the mandates of the people and the army.

The resolution of the congress was immediately despatched to all the departments, towns, and garrisons, and without exception met with the entire approbation of them all. This was officially notified to the supreme government, with the assurances that the congress had, in that instance at least, gratified the desire of the nation, and that the departments would have instructed their deputies to offer the crown to Iturbide, but that they had sworn to support the plan of Iguala and treaty of Cordova, and they were not previously aware that the stipulation, guaranteeing the crown to the Bourbon family, had been rendered nugatory by the decree of the court of Madrid, and the contingency occurred, by which the Congress were permitted, and required to offer it to some other individual.

It will be proper here to state, that Brigadier Santa Anna, then a Colonel of infantry at Vera Cruz, whose biography is also appended to this book, was one of the first officers of the provincial garrisons who congratulated Iturbide, and in his despatches to the latter, declared that he had himself made arrangements to proclaim him emperor at Vera Cruz, in case it had not been done at the city of Mexico. This fact is only worthy of remark, because, as subsequent events will show, this individual was the first to raise the standard of revolt against the government of the empire.

In confirmation of the vote by which Iturbide was elected emperor on the 19th of May, the congress, on the 22d of June following, resolved, without a dissenting voice,—there being one hundred and nine members present,—that the crown should be hereditary in the family of Iturbide in lineal succession; that his eldest son, as heir apparent, should be entitled the "Prince of the Empire," his other sons designated as "Mexican Princes; his father the "Prince of the Union," and his sister the "Princess de Iturbide." On the same occasion, the regulations for the coronation were established, and all these resolutions adopted without the restraint of the Emperor's presence; in the absence of the

military and the populace; when the city was in perfect quiet; without compulsion or suggestion, but of their own accord and in perfect unanimity. These confirmatory resolutions, passed more than a month after the event of the 19th of May, without menace or restraint, on the sole responsibility of the congress, and after most of the deputies had had time to consult with, and hear from their constituents, show conclusively, that the elevation of Iturbide to the throne, was not only a popular step, but that the deputies were aware of it, and yielded whatever objections they previously entertained, to the wishes of the people, and the necessities of the case. By these, and the former acts of this congress, the official ratification of the Provinces, and the universally expressed approbation of the people, Iturbide was made and acknowledged the Sovereign of Mexico, by the highest and most solemn acts, by which any individual can be invested with the high attributes of imperial power.

For some time after his accession to the throne, the country enjoyed an uninterrupted repose; the apprehensions of foreign invaders had passed away; the capital and the provinces were quiet, and the discontents of the factions in the congress seemed to have subsided. But little time elapsed, however, before the latent embers of discord were again fanned into a blaze; the congress repeated the scenes that preceded the coronation; clandestine meetings of its members, assembled to concoct conspiracies to overthrow the government, were detected; reports were circulated by these cabals—with the view to excite the fears of the timid republicans, and the jealousies of the aspiring Europeans—to the effect that Iturbide aimed at absolute power. The repeated charges of the conspirators were circulated in the interior; but neither the authorities nor the people believed them, and indeed disregarded them entirely, except to denounce the authors, and transmit to the capital the intelligence and proof of their treason.

Iturbide notified the congress officially, that certain of

its members were charged with conspiracy and treason, and that body was requested to inquire into the facts. To this message no attention was given, the public tranquillity was again threatened; the discontents of the people were fearfully manifested; they regarded the congress with jealousy, and the Emperor determined on ordering the arrest of the principal deputies engaged in the conspiracy. This step has since been condemned by many persons, but was undoubtedly a prerogative of the Spanish monarch; and until it was abrogated by the new constitution of Mexico, was equally authoritative there as in Spain.

On the 26th of August, the deputies accused of treason were accordingly arrested, and the *prima facia* evidence of their guilt, (*sumaria,*) which had been collected by order of the council of State, placed upon the public records. The congress now became indignant and refractory, and demanded that the imprisoned deputies should be given up to them, for trial by their compeers. Iturbide refused compliance with this demand; because, as he alleged, the congress yet contained many other individuals suspected or charged with being participators in the crimes of which the arrested were accused, and it had disregarded the accusations against the same persons previously preferred in his message, and refused to institute an investigation into their truth.

From the period of the arrest, up to the 30th of October, a constant contention existed between the congress and the Emperor. By this time the popular clamour was again aroused against the former, and that body was threatened with forcible dissolution. The provinces refused to grant any further pay to their representatives, on the ground that they did not discharge their duties. Several of them had repudiated the plan of Iguala, and the treaty of Cordova, from their places in the congressional palace, and were constantly fomenting disorder and discontent. The press and the political writers were again inveighing against the

congress, which had become the contempt of the people. The position of affairs throughout the country, the indifference and wrangling of the deputies, demanded energetic action on the part of the government, which itself must come into contempt, if it longer permitted the vacillating and factious legislature to disgrace the nation.

On the 30th of October, the Emperor transmitted his despatch to the President, informing him that the congress over which he presided was dissolved; and, without excitement or violence of any kind, the session was thereupon terminated. From all parts of the country the same congratulations followed this act of the Emperor that succeeded his accession to the throne; no dissatisfaction was exhibited; but, on the contrary, official congratulations and confirmations of the act, were received from the various departments.

The necessities of the government and the country required the action of the legislature; and, lest the measures about to be adopted by the Emperor, for the public relief, might be regarded as a usurpation of power, a legislative council was organised, composed of forty-five of the late deputies, representing each of the departments, and eight additional members, called the "Istituent Junta," whose duty it was to adopt such measures as immediate emergencies called for; and also to frame a *convocatoria* for a new congress, in conformity with the plan of Iguala, and the treaty of Cordova, avoiding the defects and errors of that adopted by the "Provisional Junta." This measure also received the general approbation of the country, and called for the renewed congratulations of the provinces and garrisons.

At this period all was tranquil in the interior; the government was in successful operation, and the people were apparently contented and prosperous. The castle of San Juan de Ulloa, however, still remained in the hands of the Spanish garrison, and it became an object of the government to capture that fortress, and expel the last armed op-

ponent of the revolution from the country, and, by that means, cut off all opportunities of communication between Cuba and that point. Santa Anna, who, it will be remembered, was one of the strongest adherents of Iturbide, and the first to congratulate him on his accession to the throne, held the station of commandant of the garrison of Vera Cruz, under Echavari, who was captain general of the province. Some jealousies and animosities sprang up between these two individuals, in reference to their respective authority, and Santa Anna attempted to procure the assassination of Echavari. In this he was baffled, and representations of the circumstance, with several other serious charges, were made against him to the Emperor, by the former captain general, the consulate, the lieutenant colonel of his own regiment, and many of the most respectable inhabitants of Vera Cruz. At the same time Santa Anna visited Iturbide, at Jalapa, to answer the charges; the interview was unsatisfactory to the latter, as the proofs of his guilt greatly preponderated his defence, and in consequence he was deprived of his command. Falling into a violent paroxysm of passion at this result, he flew back to the garrison, and, by endorsing the charges of the conspirators, who had attempted, and thus far failed, to overthrow the imperial government, succeeded in persuading the troops to join him, and raise the standard of revolt. At the city of Vera Cruz there was greater opposition to the new government than elsewhere, in consequence of the numerous and wealthy Spanish residents of the place, and hence the garrison were the more easily persuaded to revolt.

At the head of his rebel troops, Santa Anna advanced upon the towns of Alvarado and Antigua; these surrendered, and he made a rapid march to Jalapa, where he attacked the garrison, but was signally defeated, and compelled to retreat. The two former towns again placed themselves under the protection of the government. The forces of the Emperor were at this time very strong, and commanded by

General Echavari and Brigadier Cortazar, who might have easily put down the rebellion, and taken possession of Vera Cruz. But, owing to the want of celerity in their movements, Santa Anna and his dispersed followers were enabled to reach the fortress of the city, which was defended by two hundred mulattoes, under command of Don Guadalupe Victoria. Troops, munitions, and money, in great abundance, were furnished Echavari, with orders to reduce the revolting garrison, and there was no obstacle to his success. The officers at Vera Cruz, including Santa Anna, had become alarmed for their safety, and were making arrangements to embark on board a vessel to escape from the country. Echavari, however, delayed terminating the rebellion, which a few days would have sufficed to quell, with the superior forces under his command; and, indeed, his apathy induced the garrison to hold out until the 2d of February, when the act of Casa Mata was presented to, and accepted by both armies, which terminated the contest—the opposing forces uniting together, as then alleged, with no other object than to procure the re-establishment of the congress.

The conspiracies set on foot by the factious deputies were secretly fomented during the siege of Vera Cruz, the failure of which gave additional confidence to the conspirators. On the 1st of February, nearly two thousand troops had collected with the insurgent chiefs, and held their headquarters at Casa Mata. The Bourbonists and republicans had coalesced, and were in open opposition to the government, and the measures of the Emperor. At this place the convention of Casa Mata was agreed upon by the insurgent army. It provided that the congress should be reinstated, the provinces be permitted to return their "former deputies," with some few exceptions; that the person of his Majesty, the Emperor, should be respected, as he was asserted to be in favour of national representation, and that copies of the convention should be forwarded to him. This act, agreed upon by two thousand insurgents, dictating to the country

who might, or who should not, be elected to the congress; an act which acknowledged the rights and capacity of Iturbide as Emperor, and only purported to provide for the re-establishment of the congress, proved the overthrow of the imperial government.

As soon as the leaders at Vera Cruz had coalesced—Echavari turning traitor to the government—the combined forces overrun the provinces of Vera Cruz and Puebla. The Marquis de Vivauco, commandant of Puebla, also joined in the movement; and two of the most powerful provinces were thus in open rebellion. The example influenced several others, and they also agreed to the act of Casa Mata. At this juncture the Emperor placed himself at the head of the government forces, and marched out to meet the insurgents; and, on his reaching their vicinity, commissioners from the two armies met, and agreed upon a parley, until the national congress should be convened, in accordance with the new *convocatoria* framed by the "Instituent Junta," and that all differences between them should be decided by that body. During the parley, emissaries were sent to all the departments by the conspirators, to persuade them to conform to the act of Casa Mata.

Iturbide, in accordance with the agreement entered into with the commissioners, issued his proclamation for a new congress, which was convened. But finding that he had been deceived by the army, and deserted by some of his former friends, whose individual ambition had led them to oppose him; that the new congress was composed of the same individuals who were engaged in the insurrection, and that his longer continuance in a position which so greatly excited the envy and hostility of the ambitious aspirants who filled the congress, would be productive of no good to the country, or satisfaction to himself, he determined forthwith to abdicate the throne, and ask permission of the congress to exile himself from Mexico. Whether in this proposition, as has been charged, the Emperor was actuated by

fear, or by the foregoing suggestions, and a desire to avoid the animosities and strife his elevation had given rise to, must be decided by a careful reference to the facts. His own statement is worthy of regard, and will be read with interest. It is as follows:

"I surrendered my power (says the statement,) because I was already free from the obligations which irresistibly compelled me to accept it. The country did not want my services against foreign enemies, because at that time it had none. As to her domestic foes, far from being useful in resisting them, my presence might have proved rather prejudicial to her than otherwise, because it might have been used as a pretext for saying that war was made against my ambition, and it might have furnished the parties a motive for prolonging the concealment of their political hypocrisy. I did not abdicate from a sense of fear; I know all my enemies, and what they are able to do. With no more than eight hundred men, I undertook to overthrow the Spanish government in the northern part of the continent, at a moment when it possessed all the resources of a long established government, the whole revenue of the country, eleven European expeditionary regiments, seven veteran regiments, and seventeen provincial regiments of natives, which were considered as equal to troops of the line, and seventy or eighty thousand royalists, who had firmly opposed the progress of Hidalgo's plot. Had I been actuated by fear, would I have exposed myself to the danger of assassination, as I did, by divesting myself of every means of defence?

"Nor was I influenced in my resignation by an apprehension that I had lost any thing in the good opinion of the people, or in the affections of the soldiers. I well knew, that at my call the majority of them would join the brave men who were already with me, and the few who might waver, would either imitate their example, after the first

action, or be defeated. I had the greater reason to depend on the principal towns, because they had themselves consulted me with respect to the line of conduct which they ought to pursue under the circumstances of the moment, and had declared that they would do no more than obey my orders, which were, that they should remain quiet, as tranquillity was most conducive to their interests as well as to my reputation. The memorials from the towns will be found in the ministry of state and the captaincy-general of Mexico, together with my answers, which were all in favour of peace and against bloodshed.

"My love for my country led me first to Iguala; it induced me to ascend the throne, and to descend again from so dangerous an elevation; and I have not yet repented either of resigning the sceptre or having proceeded as I have done. I have left the land of my birth after having obtained for it the greatest of blessings, in order to remove to a distant country, where I and a large family, delicately brought up, must exist as strangers, and without any other resources than those which I have already mentioned; together with a pension, upon which no man would place much dependance, who knows what revolutions are, and is acquainted with the state in which I left Mexico."

The new congress complied with the requests of the Emperor, permitted him to abdicate the throne and leave the country; and passed an act annulling the coronation, the acts of his government, and several of the decrees of the former congress. It also settled upon him during life a pension of $25,000 per annum, provided that he should take up and continue his residence in some part of Italy, and upon his family, after his death, unconditionally, the sum of $18,000 annually.

Demonstrations of affection and respect for the person and position of Iturbide were manifested to so great a degree at the capital, as to render it necessary to occupy the

streets with soldiers, and post artillery at the principal places; and the route of his escort to the coast was often intercepted by the people in their eagerness to pay the last tokens of regard to the man they yet loved before all others. At Tacubaya, when the Marquis de Vivauco addressed the troops on the subject of his departure, they shouted as vociferously as ever, "Live Augustin the First."

Iturbide remained in Italy but five months, having determined to go to England; where, learning that an attempt had been made to establish a republican government in Mexico, and that his country was again the theatre of domestic war, he was persuaded to return and offer his services to restore, if possible, happiness and tranquillity to the nation. In pursuance of this resolution he sent several communications to the government offering his services, and embarked on board a vessel with his family and a friend, Col. Charles de Beneski, and arrived off the bar of *Soto la Marina* on the 12th of July, 1824. Here he was met by General Garza, the Governor of Tamaulipas, who, pretending friendship for Iturbide, offered his assistance in forwarding his views, but at the same time advised him to surrender himself a prisoner to the congress of Tamaulipas and abide its disposition, assuring him that his representations to that assembly would meet with favour.

In the absence of Iturbide the national congress had decreed, that "in case he should attempt to land in the country in any capacity whatever, he should be declared an outlaw," and the authorities should proceed to punish him as such. He was not aware of the existence of this denunciation when he landed, and unconsciously yielded to the treacherous advice of Garza; and the congress of Tamaulipas with the utmost precipitation, and without giving him a trial, or even a hearing, passed sentence of death upon him in pursuance of its vindictive construction of the national decree.

The interval before the expiration of his sentence was spent

in performing the last duties of a Christian; and when he was brought out to be executed, he asked and obtained permission to address the soldiers, which he did in the following language:—"Mexicans! in this last moment of my life I recommend to you the love of your country and the due observance of our holy religion; it is religion which will lead you to glory. I die for having flown to your assistance, and die happy in expiring among you. I leave this world with honour and not as a *traitor*—this foul stigma shall not attach itself to the fair fame of my descendants. No, it shall never be said that I was a traitor! Preserve strict subordination and be obedient to your commanders. By acting in conformity to their mandates you will obey those of your Creator. I do not address you from any motives of vanity, for I am far from harbouring them. From the bottom of my heart I forgive all my enemies—really from my heart." These were the last words of the "Hero of Iguala" and the "Liberator of Mexico." With his own hands, (says a by-stander,) he adjusted the bandage upon his eyes, knelt down, and receiving two balls in his forehead and two in his heart, fell dead.

Thus was ended the career of Don Augustin de Iturbide, the greatest statesman, the best man, the purest patriot, and the greatest benefactor of his country, of any of his cotemporaries in Mexico. He fell by the treachery of his pretended friend, Garza, and the unjust and ungrateful decision of the congress of Tamaulipas.

The highly interesting family of this distinguished man, consisting of Mrs. De Iturbide, five sons and three daughters, now reside in the city of Philadelphia, and are objects of the highest regard to a great portion of the Mexican nation—a nation that now mourns the loss of its greatest benefactor and patriot, and too late discovers and laments the errors and crimes of the factions which were instrumental in overthrowing his government.

Lopez de Santa Anna

ANTONIO LOPEZ DE SANTA ANNA,

EX-DICTATOR OF MEXICO.

This remarkable man, who has occupied a greater space than any of his cotemporaries since Iturbide, in the history of the Mexican Republic, was born in the department of Vera Cruz. Springing from an obscure and indigent family, he has been the architect of his own character and fortunes, and by his intuitive energy, talents, and ambition, has risen to the highest stations of his country,—passing through all the grades of rank, from a subaltern in the field, to the leader of armies, and finally the chief magistrate of the nation.

In early life, with an inadequate education, he joined the army, and for some time was more distinguished for his severe application to the study of the military science and the necessary accomplishments of the gentleman, than his success in the practical duties of the soldier. With a natural suavity of manners, refined by his intercourse with the best society of Vera Cruz, and the discipline of a studious and observing mind, he acquired a facility of address that rendered him at once conspicuous in the camp, and secured the favourable and friendly notice of his superiors, both in the army and the society in which he was admitted.

Taking advantage of his popularity, he was soon enabled to rise to inferior commands, in which he invariably distinguished himself. While yet a lieutenant, at the head of thirty men, he attacked and vanquished a party of Indians, numbering about three hundred and twenty, well armed, and occupying a strong position in the deep gorge of a mountain, which he forced at the head of his small squad of regulars. But it was generally by the subtilty of his manœuvres, and the success of his stratagems, that he ob-

tained his earlier, as well as later laurels; and there is no trait in the Mexican soldier held in higher appreciation—not even that of courage—(although Santa Anna was never supposed to be wanting in that respect,) than a successful subtilty in forming and executing plans to baffle his enemy. As early as 1815, he had commended himself to the favourable regard of the leaders of the country, and was rapidly rising in wealth, military rank, and political influence. One of the first friends of the revolution, he ranged himself in the ranks of the liberals, and warmly espoused the friendship and plans of Iturbide; and on the promulgation of the new plan of government, on the 24th of February, 1821, he placed himself at the head of a small and badly organized force, and pronounced in favour of the movement of Iturbide, attacked the Spanish garrison at Vera Cruz, and compelled them to evacuate the city and confine themselves to the castle of San Juan de Ulloa, which fortress, however, (one of the strongest in the world,) commanded the entrance to the harbour. The position of the commander of the forces at Vera Cruz, was one of the first importance, and gave great power and responsibility to the incumbent. These he was in every respect capable of discharging with ability and success, and thereupon was appointed Commandant-general of the department.

While acting in this capacity he gave offence to the Emperor Augustin, in consequence of his treatment to a superior officer, General Echavari, and was dismissed from the command of the department. This incensed Santa Anna, who, leaving Iturbide at Jalapa with the courier bearing the order of his dismissal, reached Vera Cruz before the arrival of the messenger with the intelligence of his disgrace, and influenced the garrison, with whom he was popular, against the alleged usurpations of the Emperor, who, he declared, had "acted the usurper; having forcibly dissolved the national Cortes, and imprisoned several of its members who had refused to submit to his dictation; and that he had

assembled in their stead a venal junta that more perfectly reflected the will of its imperial master."

By such representations he was successful in stimulating his soldiers to revolt, and immediately prepared to commence hostilities against the emperor. He issued his "*pronunciamento*" against the government of the "Usurper," and called on his countrymen, in other departments, to aid him "in resisting the encroachments of a tyrant, who had laboured to deliver them from foreign bondage, only to fasten upon them the chains of a domestic despotism." The republican party of Mexico, unwilling to sacrifice what they had won from Spain, to, what they *imagined* to be, the ambition of one man, and inspired by the boldness and strength of Santa Anna, whose renown was already coextensive with the land, readily joined his standard, and several other garrisons and departments immediately followed the example of Vera Cruz.

Guadalupe Victoria, one of the most popular and talented republicans of the country, who had been compelled to escape from the persecution and pursuit of individual enemies, at this time emerged from his retreat, and leading the new revolution, succeeded in dethroning Iturbide, who went into voluntary exile from the country; and, in establishing the Federal Constitution of 1824, after the plan of that of the United States, being, with few exceptions, copied from that instrument. In these exceptions, however, was sacrificed the safeguards of republican liberty; for, while there was no provision for the right of trial by jury—that great palladium of popular liberty—there was inserted an article giving to all classes equal rights of citizenship, without regard to intelligence, property, or colour. Another provision declared the Roman Catholic, and no other, to be the religion of Mexico—thus destroying the right of men to think or act for themselves—enslaving their consciences, and giving to a priesthood, however corrupt, the entire spiritual dominion over the people.

In 1824, Guadalupe Victoria was installed the first President of Mexico. A virtuous and patriotic man, his only aim was the establishment of his country's independence, and the promotion of constitutional liberty. Aware of the success of the republican experiment in the United States of the north, and an ardent admirer of American character, he readily listened to the plans of colonizing the unoccupied public lands with American settlers; and it was under his administration that the colonization experiment commenced.

For a time, Mexico gave evidence of good order and good government; but she was not destined to a long repose from anarchy and bloodshed. Santa Anna, who was the father of the revolution which resulted in establishing the federal constitution, having himself borne an active part in the contest; in perfecting the constitution itself, and elevating the virtuous and patriotic Victoria to the presidency, was the first man to stir up civil war and raise the standard of revolt. In the prosecution of his traitorous designs, he left Vera Cruz with a considerable force, in the early part of 1825, landed at Tampico, and, meeting with no resistance, marched to the city of San Louis Potosi, the capital of the department of that name, proclaiming himself the "Protector of the Republic." The new government, however, was too popular with the people, and possessed sufficient strength to put down the revolution. Santa Anna, already perjured, by having violated the sacred instrument he had not only aided in erecting, but sworn to support and defend, was compelled again to submit to the government, and take a second oath of allegiance to its authority and the constitution. During the remainder of President Victoria's term, which expired in 1828, he remained in retirement at his principal estate of Monga de Clavo, awaiting the first opportunity, after the popular indignation had subsided, to make his reappearance. This did not occur until after the next election. The contest for the second term of the chief-magistracy was one of

the most remarkable and violent political strifes ever known in that country.

There were but two candidates, Gomez Pedraza and General Guerrero, who were respectively the favourites of two distinct masonic fraternities, each entertaining peculiar, but opposite notions of government; the former was the candidate of the York lodge, which imbibed its political principles, and received its name from the New York masons, under the auspices and direction of the foreign republican legations at Mexico; the latter was the candidate of the Escoces, or Scotch lodge—inculcating the principles of monarchical government, under the influence of certain European diplomatists in that country.

The excitement which prevailed throughout the republic can scarcely be imagined; the popular fury was wrought up to the highest pitch, by these secret rival factions; and the experiment—it is to be hoped the last—abundantly proves the danger of using two such tremendous engines of prejudice and power in popular elections. Communities, individuals, and families, were arrayed against each other in hostile attitude, and the plains of Mexico were again reddened with the blood of civil war. But Pedraza, the republican lodge candidate, was triumphant, having been elected by a majority of one vote in the electoral college.

Pedraza was in the chair—the popular war had not subsided—no influence or power seemed capable of quieting the troubled waves. At this propitious period for the traitorous agitator, Santa Anna again made his appearance, and, raising an army, composed of discontented soldiers, and the disappointed mob, who had failed to elect Guerrero, took immediate possession of the strong castle of Perote, and published a *pronunciamento* against the election of Pedraza, declaring it to be a cheat; and that General Guerrero was the constitutional President of Mexico.

In his first attempt to subvert the government, he was defeated and compelled to evacuate Perote, and fly to a re-

treat in the mountains of Oajaca, where he joined a band of b igands, a refugee from the violated constitution and outraged laws of his country. But he was not destined to remain long in concealment; the revolution he began, had progressed successfully at the capital; Pedraza was deposed and driven into exile, and Guerrero succeeded to the station of President. Santa Anna was immediately afterwards appointed to the command of the same army which had defeated him at Perote, and also Governor of Vera Cruz; and subsequently, in May, 1829, was called into Guerrero's cabinet as Secretary of War and Marine.

Spain had not yet surrendered her claims to Mexico, and on the 27th of July, 1829, landed a considerable force at Tampico under command of General Barradas, for the purpose of re-subjugating the country. At this crisis, Santa Anna was called into the field, and placed in command of the Mexican army, which he immediately marched to Tampico, and, after a siege of but a few days, compelled the royal forces to capitulate. This was the last attempt of Spain to re-establish its authority in Mexico; and Santa Anna had the honour of terminating the war,—by which was achieved the independence of his country.

About this period another revolution broke out under the lead of General Bustamente, who had collected a large force, pronounced against the government, and succeeded in taking captive the usurper Guerrero, who was tried and executed for high treason. Bustamente, who had been mainly instrumental in deposing the constitutional president Pedraza, and elevating Guerrero, was the first to question the rights and authority of the latter, and after his overthrow, seized the reins of government to himself.

Santa Anna, although the bosom friend, the sworn counsellor, member of the cabinet and commander of the armies of Guerrero, offered no sufficient resistance to the revolution, which he might have put down, but, on the contrary, soon acquiesced in it. In 1832, again tired of the calm of

peace and the absence of bloodshed, he stirred up another revolution, published his *pronunciamento* against Bustamente, overthrew him, and banished him from the country. And now to make his *inconsistency* consistent, he affected to recall the exiled Pedraza, whom a few years before he was the first to raise a revolution to overthrow, and set him up a living puppet in the presidential chair, the tool of the unblushing traitor and tyrant, to chisel out and execute the plans to secure his own election to the presidency of Mexico.

In the brief period before the expiration of Pédraza's term, Santa Anna, the active director of affairs behind the scene, had managed to turn every influence of the government to bear on his election. The people, accustomed to violence and misrule, cared little who occupied the presidential chair, and hoped in the elevation of the leading spirit of treason and rebellion, to put an end to the constant recurrence of civil war and bloodshed, such as had hitherto desolated the country at brief intervals; and if there was virtue in the nation sufficient to govern it honestly and properly, it did not make its appearance among the aspirants to the presidential office.

In 1833 Santa Anna was duly elected and installed President, and for a few months the people of this ill-starred republic enjoyed a happy repose from the turmoil and desolation of domestic war. The president had promised before his election to sustain the federal constitution, and, at his installation, had solemnly sworn to support it and administer the laws of the constitutional congress. He had, at this time, collected together a large army near the city of Mexico, for the avowed purpose of quieting a local revolution; it was arranged with his officers to prepare for military inspection, when the signal should be given on the approach of Santa Anna, and the soldiers were to proclaim him dictator. The arrangements were accordingly made, and at the appointed signal, his generals and their obedient soldiers

shouted "long live Santa Anna, long live the Dictator of Mexico!" But the artifice failed; the majority, with the city garrison, were opposed to the movement. Santa Anna, to conceal his chagrin and mortification, affected not to have known the design of his leaders, and immediately condemned those most zealous in his interest to banishment from the country.

In 1834, by military force, he dissolved the legislative council of the government, and effectually overthrew the federal constitution of 1824, establishing instead, a central military despotism. He deposed governors of departments who refused to obey his mandates by force of arms; dissolved refractory state legislations by the same means, and directed who should be sent from his subservient departments, as members of the house of deputies.

The inhabitants of Zacatecas and Coahuila and Texas resisted these usurpations and encroachments of this dictator of centralism, and refused to comply with his tyrannical inhibitions. At the city of Zacatecas, five thousand inhabitants of the department had determined to defend the constitution of 1824. They had gathered around the already prostrate form of the goddess of liberty, and sworn that the plains of Zacatecas should flow with the blood of its brave sons before they would surrender to the despot. Santa Anna knew the bravery of the Zacatecans,—the best soldiers and most patriotic people of Mexico,—and feared to combat them on fair terms. With his characteristic duplicity and subtlety, he affected to quarrel with one of his favourite generals, who fled from his ranks, and pretending to join the liberal party, sought shelter in Zacatecas. The reputation of this officer, as a soldier, gained his admission to the army which had enlisted in defence of the constitution, and he was forthwith placed in command. But no sooner did Santa Anna make his appearance before the impregnable city of Zacatecas, than this mercenary leader induced the constitutional army to leave their secure position in the city

and encamp in sight of the central forces, possessing twice their numerical strength. In this position night came on, the horses of the Zacatecans had been purposely sent away to graze, and the sentinels withdrawn from their posts, when Santa Anna immediately put his troops in motion, surrounded the camp of the liberals and attacked them at great advantage; a tremendous slaughter ensued, and those of the Zacatecans who did not surrender or escape, were immediately put to the sword.

After this inglorious victory on the part of the president, his soldiers were turned loose upon the city, and the scene that followed baffles description. Beautiful and unoffending women were dragged from their couches and violated in the public streets; babes were murdered in their sleep or upon their mother's breast. Foreigners were assassinated at noon day, and robberies and thefts committed in the most fearful and appalling excesses. Zacatecas was thus subdued and submitted; and Santa Anna forthwith despatched a division of his forces, under General Cos, to Monclova, the seat of government of the state of Coahuila and Texas, with orders to humble that department, and immediately returned himself to the city of Mexico.

General Cos, in obedience to instructions, ordered the political authorities of the state to deliver up to the central government, the governor of Coahuila and Texas, several members of the legislature, and other prominent citizens, including some American settlers in Texas. This order was disobeyed; and the legislature of Coahuila and Texas was thereupon forcibly dissolved, and the governor, to avoid arrest, was compelled to escape. The act of state confederation was thereby destroyed; and, to attain the climax of military despotism, the arms of the American citizens, east of the Rio Grande, were ordered to be delivered up. These demands were peremptorily refused. The inhabitants of Texas, the greater part of whom were nursed in the cradles of American liberty, assembled together in

primary meetings, simultaneously throughout the country, and resolved to resist the usurpations of the tyrant.

General Cos, with an army of fifteen hundred centralists, was already in Texas, having reached and entrenched himself in the fortified town of San Antonia de Bexar. From thence he sent a detachment of more than 200 strong, under command of Col. Castonado, to the town of Gonzales, and upon its reaching the opposite bank of the Gaudaloupe, the commander ordered the inhabitants to send him their cannon. This they refused to do, but proceeded immediately to collect a force to protect it. A small party of Americans—about 100 in number—were soon raised, and the answer was returned to the Mexican officer, that he could have the contents, but not the cannon. The forces, thereupon, met, the centralists outnumbering the Americans about two to one; but the action was brief, and resulted in the perfect defeat of Castonado, who was compelled, after considerable loss, to retreat to San Antonio. The battle of Gonzales has been fitly styled the "Lexington of the Texan revolution," and like its great prototype, was the opening of the war, and a contest for ordnance.

The people of Texas, determined not to be subdued without an effort, at least, to oppose the designs of Santa Anna, had already called a convention of deputies from the various districts, and declared themselves in favour of the federal constitution of 1824, which they alleged had been subverted by a military despot—and called on the citizens and authorities of the other departments of Mexico, to sustain them in the defence of constitutional liberty. Their appeal was disregarded, or only met with opposition; but, nevertheless, preparations were made to defend their position and meet the coming shock.

General Burleson was before the walls of the Alamo, with six hundred American federalists, awaiting the progress of events, when the brave General Milam, who had just escaped from the dungeons of the interior, made his appearance

and called for volunteers to join him, for the purpose of attacking General Cos, and driving Santa Anna's forces from the country. Two hundred and sixteen gallant fellows stepped forth from Burleson's ranks. Milam immediately attacked the garrison, which occupied the strongly fortified public square of San Antonia, with fifteen hundred men, well armed, and prepared to sustain a siege of six months. The deadly American rifle told upon its victim at every discharge; the siege lasted for five days and nights, with incessant labour on the part of the besiegers, when the garrison capitulated, with the loss of more men than were engaged in the ranks of their victors, and the surrender of several hundred stands of arms, military stores and baggage. But the loss of the Texans, though small in number, was irreparable. The brave Milam was shot through the head, and several others were killed and wounded.

On the arrival of the news of the discomfiture of Cos, at the capital, Santa Anna immediately organised his forces for the invasion of Texas, and placing himself at the head of an army of 10,000 mercenary troops, advanced upon the country in the winter of 1836.

He raised a blood-red flag, and threatened before his return to exterminate every American between the Rio Grande and Sabine. His army of advance, numbering about six thousand, under command of General Sesma, was already in the confines of Texas; Colonel Travis, with only one hundred and forty-five Texians, occupied the fortress of the Alamo, at San Antonia. This gallant officer immediately despatched his messenger to the east, calling on his countrymen for assistance. The advance forces of Santa Anna soon after surrounded the Alamo, and were actually besieging the fort. Travis despatched a second messenger, calling again for assistance, and closed his appeal with this memorable language:—

"The enemy have demanded a surrender at discretion,

otherwise the garrison is to be put to the sword. I have answered his summons with a cannon shot. Our flag still floats proudly from the walls. We shall never surrender or retreat. Liberty or death!"

But prudence dictated rather that Travis should have evacuated the Alamo; for, to send more men, with the limited number then in the ranks of the Texians, was only to deliver them to certain sacrifice, and close all chance of final success.

The siege had lasted for six days—the handful of brave Texians successfully repulsing every attack of the besiegers, when Santa Anna arrived with the remainder of his army, numbering about four thousand, and took command of the entire force in person. The battle continued for four days longer, with still greater fury, until the firing from the Alamo was nearly silenced. The scaling ladders were then applied to the walls, and two unsuccessful attempts were made to pass them; the Texians repulsing their assailants with the butts of their rifles, producing great slaughter. The third attempt was more successful, and hundreds of centrales poured over the walls; the Americans fought them with terrible desperation, until they were all slain—life oozing out of them through the loss of blood, from their numerous wounds. Of this little band not a man asked for quarter, and in the agonies of death many mortal wounds were inflicted on their foes. The Alamo was taken, but its Spartan defenders were not conquered; fifteen hundred of Santa Anna's followers were killed in the engagement, being ten times the entire number of Texians engaged. The pages of history scarcely furnish a parallel in military heroism and achievement. Here was a handful of men, assailed by seventy times their number, sustaining a hopeless siege of ten days, without a relaxation of courage or effort, until the last man had fallen, and every spirit had taken its departure from its mangled and bleeding tenement. This was the

crificial altar of the Texian revolution; here fell its bravest spirits—Travis, Crockett, Bonham, and Bowie; the latter, by order of Santa Anna, was butchered on his sick couch. The ordinary rites of Christian burial were denied the remains of these brave men—the bodies of the entire number were taken outside the walls, thrown together, and burned.

So intimately connected was the cause, origin, and progress of the Texian revolt, with the history of Santa Anna, that the author will be readily excused for dwelling more minutely on these events.

It will be remembered that the revolution began in the resistance of several of the eastern provinces of Mexico, including Texas, to the military encroachments and civil usurpation of Santa Anna. The first convention of the people of Texas, called to consider the state of public affairs, declared for the federal constitution, which they had sworn to support, and which the president had overthrown—destroying the fundamental basis of State confederation, and the liberty of the States—imprisoning their legislators and deposing their governors; Zacatecas had been cheated, and Coahuila had submitted; and the call of Texas for aid to assist in restoring the constitution and the liberty of the nation, had been disregarded by the friends of federalism in Mexico; Santa Anna with a powerful army was overrunning the country; the blood-red flag of total extermination was planted in the west; the bravery and valour of Texan troops was known; their superiority over their foes had been tested. Under these circumstances what impulse was wanting to the convention then assembled to induce the step they were about to take? The causes of resistance and of revolution were grievous and insupportable, and fairly challenge investigation, not only upon the principles of natural or social rights, but comparison with any other revolution, in any other age or country. On the second of March, 1836, Texas was declared "free, sovereign, and independent;" her citizens pledged their lives and fortunes to sus-

tain that declaration, and the success of their experiment is known to the world.

The next important event in the history of this campaign has left the foulest stain on the name of Santa Anna—a stigma that can never be erased—the crowning act of infamy of his whole life. The Texian volunteers, under Colonel Fannin and Captain King, numbering about four hundred, capitulated to General Urea, and surrendered themselves as prisoners of war, under the written stipulation that they should be treated as such; and in consideration of their capitulation and paroles not to take up arms again in the Texian war, that general had agreed to convey them to Copano, on the coast, and embark them on board a vessel within eight days, which should land them at New Orleans. By order of Santa Anna this convention was violated, and these unoffending men, prisoners of war, their lives and return to New Orleans guaranteed by a sacred treaty stipulation, were marched out, knapsacks on, under the impression indeed that they were on their way to their homes and their families, when they were commanded to halt—the knell of death was sounded, and every man, save two surgeons who were saved, and several others who escaped, were treacherously shot on the spot. Here was wholesale murder of the foulest kind, and whoever may be disposed to overlook the previous errors or faults of this man, will scarcely attempt to excuse or palliate this one, transcending in turpitude every act of his life.

The Texian army, under General Houston, at this time about twelve hundred strong, was prudently falling back upon the eastern settlements, which as yet had furnished but a small quota of their fighting-men, in the hope that they might secure the advantage of a division of Santa Anna's army, and, with an expected accession from the "five hundred sleeping rifles on Red river," be enabled to risk an engagement, and turn the tide of victory in the opposite direction. Houston had left the Colorado, and recrossed the

Brazos; his troops were becoming dispirited, or impatient for a fight; it required all the sagacity and firmness of their general to prevent desertion on the one hand, or rash and imprudent encounters with the Mexicans on the other. In the mean time, his spies acquired intelligence of the division of Santa Anna's forces, and that the number of one thousand men, subsequently reinforced by five hundred additional troops, under command of the Mexican chief in person, were marching in the direction of San Fillipe. He left small parties behind him to annoy the enemy, and leave an impression of the precipitate retreat of the Texian army. The plan succeeded; Santa Anna pushed on at the head of his small division with great rapidity, leaving the larger division, encumbered with the baggage and heavy artillery, far behind, expecting soon to plant his eagles on the banks of the Sabine. The Texian general prudently concealed from his army, as far as possible, his plan of operations, until Santa Anna had crossed the Brazos, and was marching towards Harrisburg; the Texians, between six and seven hundred strong, were about thirty miles above him to the north, when Houston immediately ordered a rapid march towards Buffalo Bayou, indicating his intention to gratify his men with an attack upon the enemy. He came up with the Mexicans on the 19th of April, and the next day a skirmish ensued between the advance and rear guards of the two armies.

On the 31st of April—a day memorable for its important results—the armies met at the confluence of Buffalo Bayou, and the San Jacinto river; Santa Anna had greatly the advantage of position, with his artillery handsomely posted on a commanding hill; the Texans, with their leader in the advance, marched up steadily under the fire of their adversaries, reserving their own until within a few rods of the Mexican lines, when they poured forth the contents of their deadly and well-aimed rifles, in steady and repeated volleys, occasionally throwing themselves on the ground, at the flash

of the Mexican artillery, to avoid the shot. The lines of Santa Anna began very soon to give way; the well-directed bullets of the Americans cut them down in great numbers; his artillery was captured by a bold push of a single gallant company. The order of charge was now given by Houston, and his men swept over the plain with the besom of death.—Seven hundred and twenty Mexicans were slain, and six hundred taken prisoners, including Santa Anna, "the hero of an hundred battles," the then president of Mexico, and commander-in-chief of the invading army. This day decided the fate of Texas, and possibly the destiny of the Spanish race on the North American continent.

When the august prisoner was brought into the Texan camp he announced himself as "Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna, the president of Mexico, who surrenders as your prisoner;" and remarked to Houston, that *he* was born to no common destiny, who was the *conqueror* of the Napoleon of the south." He further told Houston, that he had "no doubt arrangements could be made between them to prevent the further effusion of blood, and that would be mutually advantageous to Mexico and Texas." Satisfied to make any honourable arrangement to terminate the war, and secure the independence of the country, Houston convened a council of war, composed of the most sagacious and intelligent persons of the army and the government, to hear the propositions of the captive chief.

Under different circumstances the Texians would not have condescended to treat with the murderer of Fannin's men; but their situation was yet far from being safe; they had a small force only—the Mexican army under Filasola, numbering about six thousand, was marching to the east, and, to say the least, if the issue was not doubtful, contingencies might occur to render it so. With these reflections, the proposition of Santa Anna was considered; and it was finally agreed, that the division of the Mexican army under Filasola should evacuate the country, and the prisoners

taken at San Jacinto, including the captive president, be sent to Mexico. The fourth article of the treaty pledged the personal and official influence of Santa Anna and several of his officers, on their return to the Mexican capital, to procure the acknowledgment of the independence of Texas, in the following language:

"That the President Santa Anna, in his official character as chief of the Mexican nation, and the Generals Don Vicente Filasola, Don Jose Urea, Don Joaquin Ramires de Sesma, and Don Antonio Guano, as chiefs of armies, do solemnly acknowledge, sanction and ratify the full, entire, and perfect independence of Texas, with such boundaries as are hereafter set forth and agreed upon for the same. And they do solemnly pledge themselves, with all their personal and official attributes, to procure, without delay, the final and complete ratification and confirmation of this agreement, and all the parts thereof, by the proper and legitimate government of Mexico—by the incorporation of the same into a solemn and perpetual treaty of amity and commerce, to be negotiated with that government at the city of Mexico, by ministers plenipotentiary, to be deputed by the government of Texas for this purpose."

In accordance with this treaty, and subsequent arrangements, the Mexican troops evacuated Texas; the prisoners were sent home, including Santa Anna, who was escorted as far as Washington City, (D. C.,) where he proposed a conference with General Jackson, in reference to the final adjustment of the differences with the new Republic. At this interview, nothing definite was agreed on, nor did any thing transpire to indicate a disposition on the part of Santa Anna not to fulfil, faithfully and exactly, every obligation he had voluntarily contracted with the government of Texas. On his return to Mexico, however, he announced to the world his intention to disregard the convention he had entered into with "Mr. Houston," as he styled the victor of San Jacinto, albeit he had conquered the

"Napoleon of the south;" and pleaded as an excuse, the doctrine, that obligations contracted by an individual under *duress* were absolutely void.

It was unnecessary for Santa Anna to have interposed this plea; his habitual disregard of all obligations, his well-known treachery, on so many previous occasions, would have furnished the best excuse for the exercise of the same characteristics without protesting a falsehood before the world. It was a voluntary proposition on his part, and he entered into the stipulations contained in the fourth article of the treaty without the least compulsion; and, in order to take away all colour of duress, he was informed that his life would be spared, and his liberty restored—the only conditions being, that his forces, then in the country, be ordered to evacuate.

Bustamente, who had been previously expatriated, took advantage of these misfortunes of his fallen enemy, and his absence from the presidential chair, which was filled in the mean time by a president, *ad interim*, and returning immediately to Mexico, excited a popular movement against Santa Anna, and was, without opposition, elected president.

The second administration of Bustamente was quite as unpopular as the first; several *pronunciamentos* and revolutions transpired in the interior, and serious difficulties menaced the country from without. The French squadron, commanded by the venerable admiral Baudin, had blockaded the port of Vera Cruz. In these emergencies the military talents of Santa Anna could scarcely be dispensed with; in accordance with orders, he therefore gathered a considerable force, and, after putting down the domestic revolutions, and quieting the interior, marched to Vera Cruz, took the command of the Mexican forces of the department, and prepared to defend the city. The castle of San Juan de Uloa, however, fell into the hands of the enemy; but the French were less successful on the main shore, having been repulsed with considerable loss by Santa Anna, in an action,

in which he received a severe wound in his leg, which eventually rendered it necessary to amputate that limb.

The difficulties with France were soon settled, but not without a perfect compliance with the just demands of Louis Philippe. Santa Anna, by his valour on this occasion, acquired the title of "Hero of Vera Cruz;" and in the eyes of Mexicans, had quite effaced the disgrace of his defeat at San Jacinto. After this affair he left the army, and prudently remained in retirement at Manga de Clavo, refusing to join in the lesser revolutions that were constantly transpiring, until one of great magnitude occurred in 1841, in the department of Gaudalajara. In this movement he joined, and bent all his influence and energy against the government, which was overthrown, and Bustamente again driven into exile.

By the adoption of the plan of Tacubaya, and the guarantees of La Estanzuela, the new constitution of 1836 was abolished, and Santa Anna declared dictator, with the necessary powers for reorganizing the national government. Under this administration the capitulation of the Santa Fe expedition occurred—an expedition fitted out by the merchants of Texas for peaceful purposes, and in compliance with an invitation from the authorities of the department of Santa Fe, to visit that capital, for the purpose of trade, and to establish friendly commercial relations with the country. The expedition, which had gone prepared to defend itself against the numerous Camanches, who infested the route, as it approached Santa Fe, worn down by fatigue, and exhausted from hunger, was met by a considerable force under Governor Armijo and betrayed into a capitulation, or convention, by which they (the members of the expedition) agreed to surrender their arms, to prevent the hostility of the Mexicans, who, it was pretended, suspected their friendly purposes; and, when the trading should be accomplished, and they were ready to leave the province, it was solemnly stipulated, that their arms should be returned. But no sooner

were the Texians disarmed, than Governor Armijo made them his prisoners, appropriating to himself their merchandise, and sending them, under strong escort, with great despatch, and on foot, towards the city of Mexico, distant some two thousand miles. Of the sufferings of these men, and the inhuman cruelty of their captors while on their march, the world is familiar; they reached their destination, and were immediately doomed to the most degrading servitude; some of them, chained to African and Mexican convicts, were compelled to work on the streets, by order of the *very* man who was indebted to the mercy and magnanimity of the same people for his life and liberty, and who was treated by *them*, after his misfortune at San Jacinto, with every attention and kindness consistent with his safety and detention as a prisoner of war.

By means of the extraordinary exertions of the American and other ministers at Mexico, and in consequence of the personal solicitations of Messrs. Jackson and Clay, and several other prominent gentlemen of the United States, Santa Anna was induced to liberate these unoffending and unfortunate men, who immediately returned to their country after an absence of nearly two years.

The Yucatan revolt broke out in 1841, and continued until that province dictated its own terms of submission to the government of Santa Anna, which was unable to subdue them.

In the fall of 1842, a Mexican foray was made upon the defenceless town of San Antonio, (Texas) by 1,300 Mexicans under General Woll, and several citizens were captured and carried off, including the officers and attendants of the District Court, then in session. This expedition was unauthorized by the government of Mexico, but consisted of freebooting *rancheros*, headed by an individual who held a commission and was allured with his followers into the Texian settlement by the hope of pillage. General Houston, then President of Texas, ordered out 800 volunteers and militia to

rendezvous at San Antonio on the 27th of October, in obedience to public sentiment, to chastise the insolence of the Mexican invaders. Brigadier-general Summerville, of the western brigade, was entitled to the command of the forces raised or sent into his district, and the lead of the troops was accordingly entrusted to him. On his arrival in the west, he found the army filled with aspirants to the command, whose aim it was to raise an excitement against him and deprive him of his station. Disregarding the disaffection and disorganization, incident to the various quarrels that occurred on this subject, he marched his forces to the Rio Grande and took possession of the town of Loredo. Before his arrival at this point, numerous appearances of mutiny were manifested; and after retiring from the town, upwards of two hundred soldiers left his encampment, returned to Lorado, and pillaged its inhabitants of every thing valuable they could find and carry off.

This occurrence, so disgraceful to the expedition—so inconsistent with its legitimate objects, and derogatory to the character of the government, which sought to chastise, and not imitate the atrocities of their pillaging enemies, exhibited the wild character and reckless designs of so many of the volunteers, that General Summerville, ascertaining that the inhabitants of the Rio Grande frontier were too poor to afford the necessary sustenance to his expedition, and that his forces were too small and illy provided with munitions of war to penetrate the interior, and accomplish his only legitimate duty, immediately ordered his troops to withdraw from the vicinity, and, accordingly, a retrograde movement was commenced towards San Antonia.

At this juncture, the excitement became very great; and the clamours of the men were so universal, that a council of officers was called to decide the immediate course of the expedition. A few of the troops, disgusted with what had already transpired, and feeling themselves disgraced by the conduct of many of their associates, insisted upon returning

to their homes; but by far the greater number of them, either panting to distinguish themselves in daring adventure, or intoxicated with the taste of Mexican "beauty and booty," so easily obtained, were equally anxious to continue their march through the sparse settlements of the Rio Grande. The latter disposition prevailing in the council of officers, a division of the troops was ordered, and those preferring to return to the interior, were permitted to do so; and the remainder immediately took up their march in the direction of Guerero, with no higher hopes than those inspired by a desire for desperate and rash adventure; or more certain or definite object of greater importance, than plundering a few contemptibly weak and extremely impoverished Mexican villages.

Guerero, with its population of men, women, and children, scarcely exceeding in numbers the belligerent expedition itself, was soon besieged, and a contribution levied upon its trembling and poverty-stricken citizens,—who hastily yielded up their propitiation of rags, and their rotes of ransom; the more opulent (if the term can be used) sent their best horses richly caparisoned, as propitiatory presents to the officers, begging them to prevent a recurrence of robbery, such as occurred at Loredo. The horses, of course, were received on the proposed terms; but the limited relief furnished the men did not satisfy them, and a renewed discontent was exhibited. Some of the leaders of the expedition, apparently indulging in the poetic visions of glory incident to an imaginary brilliant career, and others elated with the easy conquest of the affrighted denizens of Loredo and Guerero, determined to proceed to Meir, a town of more importance.

Here, Summerville became again disgusted with the occurrences of the march, which he foresaw and feared at Loredo, and deeming it imprudent to encounter a force of ten times his number in a strange country, which was on its march to Mier, and having but a very limited supply of

ammunition, determined to order a return to the Texas frontier. It would be supererogatory to discuss the propriety of this order in so plain a case; it was given, however, but to be disregarded by the greater part of the command. Summerville, with upwards of one hundred followers, took up his march for San Antonio, while the residue of the force, numbering about two hundred and seventy men, remained behind, the doomed victims of their own folly, rashness, and insubordination. A commander was chosen for this little band, and it was soon determined to attack Meir, and levy a contribution of five thousand dollars on its inhabitants; the money was immediately demanded, and on the alcalde's offering the sum of one hundred and seventy-three dollars, as all he was able to raise, it was promptly decided to enter the town, which they had once evacuated, and enforce the contribution, if at the risk of an engagement with Ampudia, who, it was understood, then occupied the place with several hundred men.

On the evening of the 25th December, the attempt was made; and a dark and rainy night found the little band of intrepid adventurers forcing its way, by slow degrees, against the constant fire of the enemy, to a position which it could occupy with safety and without fear, from the discharge of Ampudia's ordnance. This was accomplished with several severe skirmishes and attacks, which resulted in dispersing the Mexicans and driving them to safer quarters, when the firing of the Texians was reserved until morning. At early dawn the fight was recommenced on both sides with greater desperation. The Mexicans bringing their ordnance to bear upon the buildings in which the Texians were posted, and their officers, leading column after column up to the attack, were cut down at every advance, by the deadly discharge of the American rifle. The action continued in this way for some time, until Ampudia sent a white flag to the Texians, offering them the choice of capitulation. The proposition was

entertained, and, after some consideration, accepted—the Texians having exhausted their ammunition in a severe engagement against twelve times their number and several pieces of artillery; twelve of them were killed and eighteen wounded, while the loss of Ampudia was estimated at from five to six hundred.

The government of Texas was not responsible for either the disaster or the improprieties of this expedition. The original draft of men and volunteers was sufficiently large to have accomplished the object, and a successful descent might have been made upon the garrisoned towns. But in volunteers and militia forces, there always will be discontents, and jealousies, and aspirations; in this instance these elements were in greater strength and more active than usual. There were, in the expedition, a large number of ambitious and disaffected men who had failed to distinguish themselves on previous occasions, and who, having nothing to do and nothing to make at home, were ready for all kinds of peril or adventure; others were gentlemen, and men of high and honourable feelings, who had been for some time out of employment, and their circumstances, perhaps necessities, drew them into the camp; while others still, and very many, were only actuated by a desire to rob the rich churches of Mexico and plunder and destroy private property.

In a few days the prisoners were on their march for the strong prisons of the interior. On one occasion, in the course of their journey, they rose upon their guard, killed several of them, seized their arms, and were successful in making a temporary escape; but were again compelled, from hunger and fatigue, and the want of ammunition, to surrender to a party in pursuit. The punishment for this offence was deferred until directions from Santa Anna should be received. When the intelligence of their capture reached him, his first order was, that every man should be shot; this, however, was subsequently relaxed,

through the protests and influence of the American and several foreign ministers, to every tenth man; and in obedience to the latter determination, seventeen of the prisoners—victims of their own original imprudence and the vengeance of the Dictator—were drawn by lot from the rest and shot.

The confinement and treatment imposed on the survivors, was severe and cruel in the extreme. But Santa Anna finally released the entire number, in obedience to the generous influence of the foreign representatives at the Mexican capital, and the better impulses of his own heart, and permitted them, after more than a year's captivity, to return to their homes.

In 1843, a new constitution was formed in Mexico, entitled the "Bases of political organization of the Mexican Republic," establishing the office of president, with extraordinary powers. Santa Anna was elected to the new office, and, resigning his dictatorship, installed the second time as president on the 1st of January, 1844.

Scarcely a year had elapsed after his inauguration, before another revolution broke out in Guadalajara, under the lead of General Paredes. The failure of Santa Anna to put on foot a proposed expedition against Texas, rendered his administration assailable, and his opponents taking advantage of this circumstance, and alleging various usurpations in the exercise of his official functions as president, were successful in getting together a large force to put down his government. The movement of the revolutionists was so formidable, that Santa Anna fearing it would require extraordinary exertions to check it, in open violation of the constitutional inhibition—which declares that the president shall not command the army in person—put himself at the head of the government troops, and leaving his principal minister, Canalizo, to manage affairs at the capital, proceeded with great despatch from Jalapa to Queretero, to give battle

to Paredes and arrest the progress of the revolt. During his absence, the departments nearest the capital, including Vera Cruz, became disaffected, and joined in the revolution. No exertions of Canalizo could arrest its fearful progress, while Santa Anna was induced to fall back towards the city of Mexico, and was finally, after several manœuvres and engagements, compelled to surrender to the forces of General Herera, who had already taken possession of the government, and was seated in the presidential chair. The administration, in debating what disposition should be made of the fallen chief, were not long in coming to the determination to banish him from the country. His private property was respected, and that which had been seized restored; and, under a strong escort, he was taken to the coast and embarked on board a British vessel for Havana, under a sentence of ten years' banishment from the country.

This rapid review of the life of Santa Anna, and the principal events of his administrations in Mexico, embrace only his most prominent deeds, and the occurrences which transpired during his career, without interspersing the narrative with very many important incidents in his private life, which would go very far to illustrate the character of the man, and afford ample materials for interesting discussion. The object of the present biographical sketch, is merely to enlighten the American public upon the state of politics and morals, and the general history of the constantly recurring revolutions of Mexico, with a rapid outline of the military history of the young republic of Texas. The career of Santa Anna has been so intimately connected with all these topics, that the author has deemed himself excusable for incorporating a brief and comprehensive outline of Mexican and Texian political history, in this sketch of the life of this very prominent actor in both these highly interesting dramas.

The reader has been generally left to form his own esti-

mate of character, from a plain narrative of the facts. There are doubtless many good points in the character of Santa Anna, which other circumstances might have developed to his advantage and credit. But, placed as he has been upon the theatre of Mexican revolution, and surrounded by numerous ambitious and corrupt aspirants to the same office he sought and attained, we can the more readily excuse a large share of his faults, that would present a very different aspect if enacted under other circumstances, and among a more civilized people. No traits are more common, or so necessary to success in politics or war in Mexico, as duplicity, intrigue and cunning. The state of civilization, and other circumstances, compel the successful aspirant to civic or military honours to resort to means and management that would excite the horror, or contempt and indignation, of more enlightened and virtuous communities. The condition of the lower orders is not removed above that of the slaves of our Southern States; and the morals of the greater portion of them are far more deplorable. Although by the constitution all distinction of classes and colour is stricken down, yet the *peons* who labour on the large *haciendas*, or estates, are in a state of servitude much more degrading than the African slaves of our country; they are not the subject of bargain and sale it is true, but are beaten and driven by task-masters, and compelled to harder labour, and less comfortably fed and clothed.

For the amount of general intelligence, and the extent of the wealth and commercial intercourse of the middle classes, there is more licentiousness and vice than in any other country on the globe. The Catholic church has no where so corrupt a priesthood; it is the policy of this class, and the rich, to keep the lower orders in ignorance, in order that they may prostitute them to subserve their selfish and unworthy purposes. There are probably not five thousand females, out of the population of eight millions, who can read and write; and female chastity is only known, and not uni-

versal among the higher orders. Priest and politician, no matter how high in the clerical office, or in civil station, are permitted to keep their mistresses, and society smiles at the most unbridled licentiousness in all classes of persons. The robberies that so often occur on their highways and mountains, are often set on foot by wealthy and influential persons, or perhaps an aspiring political chief.

While this state of public morals furnishes great palliation for many of the errors, and what Americans would denominate crimes of Santa Anna, and leaves but little to choose between him and most of his rivals for station in that country, it abundantly proves the incapacity of the people for self-government. Ignorance and virtue are never handmaids; and, where the former exists in a republic, popular liberty will degenerate into licentiousness. The leaders of the federal movement of 1824, intoxicated with the success of the republican experiment in the United States, and with the doors of promotion, to the highest stations of the country, open to so many, were induced to imagine that they had only to write a constitution, and set the wheels of the government in motion, and the machine would move itself and the nation, peacefully and prosperously on, with no further trouble. In this they were greatly mistaken. Past experience has abundantly shown that great revolutions must be the work of time. The people of Mexico had been oppressed for three hundred years, and kept in the most abject ignorance and absolute slavery. It was impossible to change their habits in a day, or to enlighten them in a single hour, so as to enable them to make laws and govern themselves. Iturbide was calculated to render Mexico prosperous, enlightened and happy. Under his administration the people might have been prepared for any change. Santa Anna also, undoubtedly, properly appreciated the wants of the nation, and ambitious to place himself at its head, long since contemplated the establishment of imperial government, and with great confidence looked forward to the period when he

should wear the diadem of the empire. He is a great soldier without doubt, and a statesman of no ordinary sagacity; and, however badly he has conducted himself, in the commission of several great and unpardonable crimes, there is much doubt whether any other man can be found among his countrymen at this time, so well calculated to govern them as a monarch.

The constant recurrence of civil war will soon open a way for his return from exile, and it is yet possible he may again be at the head of the nation, either as the president of the republic, or the emperor of Mexico.

THE END.

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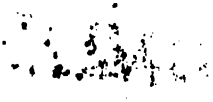
BIBLES. Oxford and American Editions of the Bible, in various sizes, including the Quarto Family Bibles, as well as 8vo., 12mo., 18mo., 24mo., &c., in plain and elegant bindings, among which are some superbly bound in velvet, with gold clasp and border.